



VICTOR COUSIN

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Great French Writers

THEIR LIVES AND WRITINGS

VICTOR COUSIN

BY

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GREAT FRENCH WRITERS.

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GREAT FRENCH WRITERS.

V STUDIES BY THE PRINCIPAL FRENCH AUTHORS OF THE DAY ON THE LIFE, WORKS, AND INFLUENCE OF THE PRINCIPAL FRENCH AUTHORS OF THE PAST.

The nineteenth century, now drawing to a close, has shown from the first, and will throughout to the next age, a vivid taste for historical research, to which it has brought an ardour, a method, entwined by a success unprecedented in former times. The story of the World and its inhabitants has been entirely re-written. The pickaxe of the archaeologist has reached to light the bones of the heroes of Mycenæ and the very features of Demetrius. Runes explained, Hieroglyphs translated, have led to reconstructing the life of the illustrious dead, sometimes to penetrating into their thoughts.

With a still more intense passion, because it was blended with affection, our century has applied itself to reviving the great writers of all literatures, those depositaries of national genius and interpreters of national thought. France has not lacked scholars to undertake this task; they have published the works, and cleared up the biography of the illustrious men we cherish as our ancestors, and who consolidated, even more efficiently than princes and captains, to the formation of modern France, not to say of the modern world.

For it is one of our glories that the sway of France has prevailed less by the power of arms than by the power of thought; and the action of our country upon the world has ever been independent of her military triumphs; indeed, she has been seen to predominate in the most distressing hours of her national history. Hence the great thinkers of our literature have an interest not only for their direct descendants, but also for a large European posterity scattered beyond our frontier.

Initiators first, then popularisers, the French were the foremost, in the turmoil prevalent at the opening of the Middle Ages, to begin a new literature: the first songs heard by modern society in its cradle were French songs. Like Gothic art and the institution of universities, mediæval literature commences in our country, thence expands throughout Europe. Here was the beginning.

But this literature was ignorant of the value of form, moderation, and reserve; it was too spontaneous, not sufficiently reflective, too heedless of questions of Art. The France of Louis the Fourteenth gave due honour to form, and was in the meanwhile the age of the revival of philosophy, of which Voltaire and Rousseau were to be the European apostles in the eighteenth century, awaiting the eclectic and scientific era in which we live; it was the period of the diffusion of literary doctrines. Had not this task been carried out as it was, the destiny of literatures would have been changed; Ariosto, Tasso, Camoens, Shakespeare, or Spenser, all the foreign writers together, those of the Renaissance and those subsequent, would not have sufficed to bring about this reform; and our age would perhaps never have known those impassioned poets, who have been at the same time perfect artists, freer than their precursors of old, purer in form than Boileau had ever dreamed: the Chéniers, Keats, Goethes, Lamartines, Léopoldis.

Many works, the publication of which is amply justified by all these reasons, have therefore been devoted in our days to the great French writers. And yet, do these mighty and charming geniuses occupy in the present literature of the world the place which is due to them? In no wise, not even in France; and for sundry reasons.

In the first place, after having tardily received in the last century the revelations of Northern literature, feeling ashamed of our ignorance, we became impassioned for

foreign works, not without profit, but perhaps to excess, to the great prejudice at all events of our national ancestors. These ancestors, moreover, it has not been possible as yet to associate with our lives as we should have wished, and to mingle them in the current of our daily ideas ; and this, precisely on account of the nature of the works that have been devoted to them, it has been no easy thing to do. For where do these dead revive ? In their works, or in treatises on literature ? That is a great deal, no doubt ; and the beautiful and scholarly editions and the well-ordered treatises have rendered in our days this communion of souls less difficult. But that is not yet sufficient ; we are accustomed nowadays to have everything made easy for us : grammars and sciences, like travelling, have been simplified ; yesterday's impossibilities have become to-day's matters of course. This is why the old treatises on literature often repel us and complete editions do not attract. They are suitable for those studious hours, too few in the lives of busy men, but not for the leisure moments, which are more frequent. Thus the book to which all turn, and which opens of itself, is the latest novel ; while the works of great men, complete and faultless, motionless like family portraits, venerated, but seldom contemplated, stand in their fine array on the high shelves of our libraries.

They are loved, yet neglected. Those great men seem too distant, too different, too learned, too inaccessible. The idea of an edition in many volumes, of the notes which divert our attention, of the scientific display which surrounds them, perhaps the vague recollection of school and classic studies, the juvenile task, oppress the mind ; the idle hour we had to dispose of has already flown away, and thus we acquire the habit of laying aside our old authors, like silent kings, careless of familiar converse with them.

The object of the present collection is to recall to our firesides those great men, whose temples are too rarely visited, and to revive between descendants and forefathers that union of ideas and purposes which alone can secure, notwithstanding the changes wrought by time, the unalloyed preservation of our national genius. In the volumes that are being published will be found precise information on the life, works, and influence of each of the writers conspicuous in universal literature, or representing an original side of French intellect. These books will be short, their price moderate ; they will thus be accessible to everyone. They will be uniform in size, paper, print, with the specimen now before the reader. They will supply on doubtful points the latest results of literary research, and thereby may be useful even to the well read ; they will contain no notes, as the name of the authors for each work will be a sufficient guarantee, the co-operation of the most able contemporary writers having been secured for the series. Finally, an accurate reproduction of an authentic portrait will enable readers to make in some degree the acquaintance by sight of our great writers.

In short, to recall the part they played, now better known, thanks to erudite researches ; to strengthen their action on the present time ; to tighten the bonds and revive the affection uniting us to the past ages of our literature ; by contemplating the past, to inspire confidence in the future, and silence, if it be possible, the doleful voices of the disheartened,—such are our chief objects. We also believe that this series will have several other advantages. It is right that every generation should reckon up the riches bequeathed to it by its ancestors, learning thus to make a better use of them. Finally, there is no better test of the quality, power, and limitations of an age, than the verdict which it passes on the productions of the past. It judges itself while giving judgment on others. It is hoped that this series may be at once useful in facilitating the comprehension of former periods, and helpful to a knowledge of the present, if the scheme, favourably received by the public, should be carried on to final completeness.

J. J. JUSSELAND.

PREFACE.

SOME critics say that philosophy is dead in France, and principally the system which, under the name of *Eclecticism*, occupied public attention so much during the last few years of the Bourbon Restoration and the reign of Louis Philippe. Whether this is the case or not, English readers will no doubt like to see the history, the character, and the applications of Eclecticism, as identified with M. Victor Cousin, described by one of the most illustrious representatives of that school, and of the University of France, M. Jules Simon, Member of the Institute, and equally distinguished as a politician, a philosopher, a writer, and a *scientist*.

The interest of the present volume is by no means confined to metaphysical questions. It contains also a number of curious details on the organisation and administration of the University of France, the state of literature, and the history of French thought and French society between 1815 and the death of M. Cousin.

As in the case of "*Montesquieu*," a few explanatory notes and an index have been added.

December 1887.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

SYNCHRONISMS.

1792 (November 23) Birth of Cousin	{ Battle of Valmy. Massacres in the Paris prisons.
1811 He enters the <i>École Normale</i>	{ The French in Spain. Birth of the King of Rome.
1812 Lecturer on Greek	{ Campaign of Russia. Burning of Moscow.
1813 Holds the <i>Conférences</i> on Philosophy	{ <i>Concordat</i> of Fontainebleau. Moreau killed at Dresden. Napoleon abdicates.
1815 Deputy-Lecturer to Royer-Collard at the Sorbonne	{ The "Hundred Days." Battle of Waterloo.
1817 Goes to Germany.	
1820 Begins his edition of <i>Probus</i> . Loses his Lectureship	{ Death of George III. The Duc de Berry murdered. Birth of the Duc de Bordeaux.
1822 Tutor to the son of Marshal Lannes	{ Political disturbances in various parts of France.
1824 Returns to Germany. Arrested and sent to prison	{ Death of Louis XVIII. Creation of a Ministry of Public Worship and of Public Instruction.
1826 Begins his translation of Plato. Edits Descombes' "Fragments Philosophiques"	{ Law on the Police of the Press (<i>Loi de justice et d'amour</i>).
1827 Resumes his Lectureship.	
1828 "Nouveaux Fragments Philosophiques"	{ Martignac Ministry. Liberal tendencies in the Government.
1830 Councillor of State; Member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction; Member of the French Academy; Officer of the Legion of Honour	{ July Revolution. Louis Philippe King of the French.
1832 Member of the Academy of Political Science; Peer of France	{ Death of Casimir Périer.
1833 Minister of Public Instruction.	
1834 Resigns his Councillorship. "Des Pensées de Pascal." "Jacqueline Pascal"	{ Death of the Duc d'Orléans.
1834 "Défense de l'Université et de la Philosophie"	{ Battle of Issy, won by Marshal Bugeaud. Death of the Duc d'Angoulême.
1835 Retires into private life	{ French expedition against Rome.
1836 Honorary Professor	{ Proclamation of the Empire. Napoleon III.
1838 "Du Vrai, du Beau, et du Bien." "Madame de Longueville"	
1838 "Madame de Sablé"	{ Crimean War.
1838 "Madame de Chevreuse." "Madame de Harcourt"	{ Congress of Paris.
1838 "La Société Française au xiii ^e siècle"	{ Bombardment and taking of Canton by the Anglo-French Army.
1838 "La jeunesse de Mamein"	
1839 (January 23) Death of Cousin	{ The French troops leave Mexico. Death of the Emperor Maximilian.

VICTOR COUSIN.

CHAPTER I.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THERE are men who make a great deal of noise during their lifetime, and of whom posterity knows nothing. M. Victor Cousin is not one of those. He has immortalised his name by very great services and very fine works ; but those who have not been his contemporaries cannot imagine what a sensation he created in this world whilst he formed part of it. He liked that ; he yearned for it. I remember that, on the eve of the Revolution of 1848, the din of political and social questions having somewhat deadened the one which he made with philosophical and religious questions, he dreaded lest he should be forgotten. "Come forward !" said he to me ; "we must come forward. I feel that we need to come forward." He said *we need*, just as the king says *we will*. When he was Minister of Public Instruction (a ministry of only eight months' duration) he filled the *Moniteur* and the official newspapers with his decrees, his circulars, his public speeches, his small-talk,

and his plans. M. Damiron, who, according to M. Cousin's own expression, was the sage of sages, used to reproach him gently on the subject. "You come forward too much," said he; "you will weary the public." M. Cousin then replied, "We must come forward."

Of all his passions, that has been the most completely satisfied. He appeared at a time when there was a great dearth of literary men. Public instruction had been at a standstill during the terrible years of the Revolution. The few men who had trained themselves were seized upon for military or administrative duties. Everybody was in one way or another incorporated into a regiment. There was, so to say, not one free man left. Michelet relates that when he left college (four or five years after Cousin) the publishers pounced upon the merest school-boy for the purpose of making of him a literary character. What an opportunity for coming forward! One did not run any risk of being stifled in the crowd. It was exactly the same for educational purposes. If you mention teaching in the *collèges* (grammar-schools) during the Empire, the list is almost limited to Villemain, Jos. Victor Leclerc, and Naudet; but how constantly they *are* mentioned! There were no public lectures. A private association founded or revived the *Lycée*, which immediately became popular. A general need was felt of speaking after a prolonged silence. I mean of *speaking French*,—for in the time of the clubs a language was current which had nothing in common with that of the great literary epochs of France. If you could only talk

correctly of literature at the beginning of the Empire, it was quite enough to ensure success; only add to this quality a morbidness of wit, and success became fanaticism. The Paris *Académie des Lettres* was opened in 1809, in the buildings of the *Collège du Plessis*. As soon as Villemain obtained a public lectureship he became popular. The psychological lectures of La Romiguière obtained with the fair sex the same notoriety as Bourdaloue's sermons did in times gone by. Ladies crowded at Lacrosette's teaching, and it was soon necessary to forbid them to attend it. M. Royer-Collard never had but a limited audience. He spoke well, with a certain austerity which commanded approbation, but made popularity difficult. I was wrong in saying just now that he *spoke well*; I should have said, *he read well*. When, a few years afterwards, Cousin was seen and heard, the effect was wonderful. Just fancy a young fellow of twenty-three, thin, with an expressive head and fiery eyes, looking like a dying man during the first few minutes, then getting animated by degrees, making the audience witness the elaboration of his thought, selecting his words, finding some admirable ones, clear enough for the listeners to know what they were cheering, obscure enough to allow full play to the imagination; gifted with a fine voice, a thorough actor, a thinker, no doubt, but still more an artist, a preacher rather than a professor, with the airs of a tribune and an apostle combined. On the very first day he secured enthusiastic, nay, even fanatical admirers.

I say enthusiastic admirers, note this ; I do not say disciples : these were few in number, and they did not cling to him. Nor do I say *friends* ; he had not many such. On the other hand, he secured crowds of admirers, soon equalled in number by his enemies. The revolution which had imperilled every head, and called in question every belief, had created for the new generation enormous intellectual needs. Cousin was the first lecturer on philosophy bold enough to talk about religion and politics. He had at first against him the few remaining *idéologues*, and the pupils of La Romiguière, who both pretended to be the representatives of French philosophy. Cousin used to ask them whether there was also a specially French geometry. He very soon frightened the pietists, who made him feel their sense of terror when they came to the head of affairs. He likewise filled with alarm the conservatives, even the liberal ones ; they accused him of disturbing "the serenity" of youth. As a finishing stroke the philosophers soon charged him with timidity. According to some, he shook the foundations of everything ; according to others, he yielded on everything. The Torys found fault with his tenderness for the last Brutus ; the Whigs with his admiration of *la Charte*. MM. de Bonald and Pierre Leroux agreed in refusing him the name of philosopher, but no one contested his genius. This concert of praise and of obloquy gave him that popularity which is more intoxicating than glory, and which does not always lead to it. Cousin

was indebted for popularity to his defects, and for glory to his solid merits.

Victor Cousin was born in Paris, November 28, 1792. According to his birth-certificate, which I possess, he was the son of a jeweller. His biographers repeat that his father, like J. J. Rousseau's, worked as a clock-maker: the fact is that he was a journeyman jeweller, who may have very well been employed likewise by a clockmaker. Damiron has often told me that his mother was a laundress: and Cousin himself is my authority for saying that to see his parents one had to ascend by a staircase which resembled very much a ladder. In a word, whatever the trade might have been, it was a family of poor artisans. He had a brother who was not seen, and who was never alluded to in his *entourage*. He was brought up, so to say, in the gutter, till the age of ten.

Towards the beginning of October 1803, at half-past four in the afternoon, the boys were leaving tumultuously the *Lyée Charlemagne*, and chasing with loud cries one of their school-fellows, wearing an overcoat which, in their eyes at least, made him very ridiculous. This was Epagomène Viguiier, whom I have since known holding the office of professor of Greek and director of the studies at the *École Normale*, the gentlest, the most learned, and the most awkward of men. At that time he was only the gentlest and most awkward of school-boys. Instead of resisting and defending himself, he was crying bitterly. The more he cried, the more they teased him. There he was, then,

knocked, jostled about, struck, when a *gamin* of eleven years old, who was playing in the gutter, threw himself in the thick of the *mêlée*, and scattered right and left the band of persecutors, dealing to the most desperate an energetic volley of blows with his fists. Madame Viguiier was told of that act of heroism on the very same evening. She learnt that the young hero belonged to a family of workmen, that he knew, by the merest chance, how to read and write, and that he spent his days in loafing about, waiting for the time when he could begin to work as an apprentice. She declared that she would defray the expenses of his education. He entered the *Lycée Charlemagne*, walked through it with giant strides, taking two classes in the year, and sweeping away all the prizes at the general competition. Had it not been for that thrashing so opportunely bestowed, we should perhaps still be in France under the charm of La Romiguière's amusing and witty system of philosophy.

M. Vapereau tells us that Cousin, when at college, had dreams of being one day a musician. I know not where he has picked up this piece of information, and I leave him the responsibility of it. The truth is this: he wrote—I forget at what date—the libretto of an opera entitled *les Trois Flacons*, the music of which was to have been composed by Halévy: neither words nor music were ever brought out. I do not believe that Cousin ever had anything further to do with music. His success at school had been so great, and there was such a scarcity of men, that he was offered the post of *auditeur*

at the Council of State, a sure stepping-stone to fortune. He preferred joining the *École Normale*, opened for the first time in 1810, just when he was leaving college. It has been said that he was the first pupil of the first promotion. We should add that there existed then no competition, properly so called, and that the pupils were selected and classed by the inspectors-general during their inspections.

The novitiate at the *École Normale* lasted two years. Cousin shone at the front rank. He had for professors of rhetoric at the *Lycée*, Mess. Victor Leclerc and Villemain; he was again under the latter, who held the situation of *maître de conférences* at the *École Normale*, and he was appointed to act as his deputy in the chair of Greek literature as soon as he had finished his own curriculum of studies. He told me that he was offered the professorship of philosophy at the *Collège Communal* of Rome. "However," added he, "I declined to leave the Paris pavement." Behold him thus, at the age of twenty, professor of Greek.

The government had thought of appointing him to a chair of philosophy, which fact shows clearly what the teaching of philosophy amounted to then. Not only was it impossible for him at his early age to have formed a doctrine for himself; he did not know, even by name, the doctrines of others. Scarcely had he caught a few pieces of information, as it were, whilst they flew past him. "I went through my course of philosophy at nineteen," he says,—that is, during his second year at the *École Normale*. There were no lectures on philosophy

in the *Lycées*, where they were established only by the decree of September 19, 1809. And even then there was only one lectureship in every *académie*.

This is how he explains his philosophical vocation in the preface of his *Fragments*, bearing date 1833: "My memory has retained, and will ever retain with grateful emotion, the remembrance of the day when, for the first time, in 1811, as a pupil of the *École Normale*, destined to the teaching of literature, I heard M. La Romiguière. That day decided the course of my whole life; it took me away from my early studies, which promised me quiet success, and threw me into a career where I have met with plenty of annoyances and storms. I am not Malebranche, but in listening to M. La Romiguière I experienced the same sort of feeling which Malebranche is reported to have had when he opened by chance a treatise of Descartes." It seems as if Cousin, by discovering La Romiguière, discovers at the same time philosophy. That is strictly true; philosophy was not taught in the *Lycées*; the *Facultés* were just born, or had just revived, as you please. The *idéologues* and the whole Condillac-school were already somewhat forgotten; their followers had never been but very few. Nobody knew anything about ancient philosophy, or even of French philosophers, previous to Condillac. The name and existence of Kant were known a few years later. M. Royer-Collard, formerly secretary to the Paris commune, and member of the *Conseil des Cinq-cents*, was appointed in 1809 lecturer on philosophy. Now a

lecturer on philosophy must teach philosophy, and, to teach it, one must know it. M. Royer-Collard, who did not know it, was walking along the *quais* in search of a master. He found him in a second-hand bookstall. An odd volume of Reid's *Essays* was for him what Descartes had been for Malebranche,—what, at that very moment, La Romiguière was for Victor Cousin. France needed very much the creation of philosophical lectureships. She belonged beforehand to the first master who might be assigned to her; but where was he to be found? Cousin assures us that the *École Normale* belonged to La Romiguière in 1811, and to Royer-Collard in 1812. We can easily guess by whom it was led to M. La Romiguière in 1811, and to M. Royer-Collard the following year: it was by the lecturer on Greek; he had even then the virtue of propagandism which distinguished him for the whole of his life.

Cousin held the Greek chair as assistant during the year 1812, and he numbered among his pupils then, M. Paul Dubois, since director of the *École Normale*, and M. Viguier, the gentleman who had been the occasion of his earliest battle in life. In 1813 he was entrusted with the *conférences* on philosophy. The duties of the *maître de conférences* consisted in attending with the pupils the lectures of the *Faculté des Lettres*, and discussing these lectures with them afterwards. Cousin numbered amongst his hearers at the *École Normale*, in 1813, Bautain (the Abbé Bautain) and Jouffroy; in 1814, Damiron. Bautain. Jouffroy. Damiron, hence-

forth constituted his society of intimate friends ; they were fellow-students as much as pupils.

Jouffroy, who had ceased to acknowledge the authenticity of the Catholic religion, and yet who felt the need of believing in its doctrines, expected to receive them, at the *École Normale*, from the lips of philosophers, no longer imposed by tradition, but demonstrated by reason. He heard nothing but theories on the origin of our ideas, and that, to him, was a great deception. He could not then grasp the secret relations which connect the most abstract, apparently, and the most lifeless problems of philosophy with the most living and the most practical questions. He bitterly complained of a system of teaching which seemed to make it its business to avoid the gravest or perhaps the only important problem. "M. de La Romiguière had gathered, as an inheritance, the philosophy of the eighteenth century, narrowed into one problem, and he had not extended it. M. Royer-Collard's vigorous mind, acknowledging that problem, had plunged into it with all his weight, and had not found time to come out of it. M. Cousin, falling in the midst of the fray, struggled at first, intending to seek the solution later on. Philosophy was in a hole where it was impossible to breathe, and where my soul felt stifled ; yet the authority of the masters and the fervour of the disciples overawed one, and I dare not show either my surprise or my disappointment."

Cousin, who had seen at once where the question of the origin of ideas led to, was full of enthusiasm. His

was a soul which only wanted an excuse to be inflamed, and the proof of this is that it had been carried away by the lectures of La Romiguière, which were only witty and charming. After two years' teaching at the *École Normale*, he was already singled out for a public situation. Royer-Collard elected him as his deputy-professor in 1815 (Nov. 13th. 1815).

1815 ! This date marks the first political episode in Victor Cousin's life : he enlisted in the royal volunteers. It was his only campaign, neither brilliant, nor bloody, nor even fatiguing ; he went as far as Vincennes, and returned to Paris the very next morning. This expedition has made less noise than M. Guizot's journey to Ghent ; but we must confess that it was less important. My opinion is this : when the country is threatened, we must join with those who defend it, whatever may be their political views ; but I remember also that Cousin was not twenty-two years old ; Napoleon's despotism, hard for France to bear, had become perceptibly odious and intolerable for the whole of Europe ; finally, in political questions more than in any others, we should forgive those whose intentions are upright. All Cousin's life, despite a few contrary appearances, has been in agreement with this first step.

He attempted public teaching after a very inadequate preparation, for it had lasted two years only. I may as well say at once that besides La Romiguière and Royer-Collard, he had as a teacher a man who did not profess to teach philosophy, but who, for the talent of inward

of fire ; he is naturally eloquent. Hegel scarcely drops a few profound utterances, somewhat enigmatical ; his language strong but confused, his motionless features, his brow covered with clouds, seem the image of self-concentrated thought. Finally, adds he, he was not extremely amiable, but I loved him, and he loved me.

You may well imagine that the whole lectures of 1818 are full of that philosophy, of which Cousin has said, "It is true, it is the truth." Schelling and Hegel lead him to Plotinus, absolute unity perceived immediately by pure thought. It is still in the name of this doctrine that during the years to come he will judge the great schools of metaphysics and of ethics which have filled the eighteenth century,—that of Condillac, which proceeds from Locke, the Scotch school, the German school of Kant and Fichte. He appreciates them with independence, because he feels himself, or believes himself master of his subject, and he brings them back to the philosophy of nature, developed and completed. Leaning upon a psychological analysis which supplies to him a basis he deems unassailable, he assigns in each school its share both of truth and of error, giving for the first time to his method the name of eclecticism, borrowed from the Alexandrine philosophers and from Leibnitz. That name has since become in current parlance the designation of his system and of his school.

The year 1820 was marked by the assassination of the Duke de Berry, which a violent reaction followed. The government, in a fit of frenzy, resolved upon tampering

with the electoral law, the freedom of the press, nay, even individual liberty. The three courses of lectures of Guizot, Cousin, and Villemain, drawing as they did a large crowd, where students had the majority, and which were also attended by people of society, constituted a focus of liberal agitation which could not fail to become suspicious. There liberty was both exercised and taught; the hearers were trained to love the principles of the Revolution,—not, we need hardly say, those of 1793, but those of 1789, which the party then at the head of the government affected to confound with the doctrines of 1793, because they had pulled down all barriers and stirred up all hatreds. Villemain found grace on account of certain reminiscences of 1815, and also owing to the fact that his lectures exclusively dealt with literature. Neither did the government dare at first to meddle with Guizot, who was notoriously *a government-man*, intimately connected with Royer-Collard, and quite recently secretary-general to the Minister of Justice. Cousin was younger, without any family ties, and merely a deputy-lecturer. Although belonging, as a matter of fact, by his tastes and his principles, to the conservative side, he was rather fond of parading about his liberalism, which was real; nor did he avoid discussing religious questions: he had uttered on the subject of the Revolution unseasonable words—a great attraction to impassion and captivate liberal young men; he was the most distinguished impersonation of the young university and of the *École Normale*; he was deprived of his lectureship. Two years later, the reaction

still increasing, Guizot had to leave his chair ; this was a great political event, and the occasion of a deep splitting in the ranks of the old liberal party. Guizot and Royer-Collard joined the opposition, whilst de Serre drew somewhat to the side of Villèle. Out of the great Sorbonne triumvirate only Villemain remained, but Villemain warned by the blows struck right and left of him, reduced by his isolation, and never having had during his whole life much taste for martyrdom. The *École Normale* was suppressed. Cousin, who was a philosopher, but still more perhaps a lecturer than an orator, found himself stopped in the midst of a career where each one of his steps had been marked by a triumph. Everything failed him at once—both the Sorbonne and the *École Normale*. Was his life, then, utterly lost? No use thinking of free (non-university) teaching, which then did not exist ; no use dreaming of journalism,—the newspapers were bridled, hampered, over-burdened with contributors. He had not, besides, the sprightly style, the light pen which is absolutely required in the profession of a journalist. He wrote as he spoke, slowly, with happy hits and splendid flights, but, on the other hand, with a certain solemn tone which smacked of the professor. His taste, too, did not lie in that direction : he belonged exclusively to general ideas. What was he to do? He accepted the situation of tutor to the son of the Duc de Montebello, and gave himself up eagerly to work of philosophic erudition, more profitable to others than to himself, which reflected much honour upon him without

increasing his glory, and did not act as a palliative for his honourable poverty. During the eight years of silence to which he was condemned (1820-1828), he published a good edition of Descartes, one of Proclus, and the first volumes of his translation of Plato, which he considered then, and has always considered, to be his chief work. He had, in 1824, to take his pupil on a trip to Germany; this suited his plans admirably, for he longed to see Hegel once more, to live again in that atmosphere of studies, discussions, and impassioned researches; he yearned to find himself in the midst of a school to which, since 1818, he had always belonged, amongst those whom he had designated, in his dedication of Proclus's commentary on the *Parmenides*—"my friends and my masters, and the leaders of the philosophy of our times."

This third journey of Cousin to Germany was marked by a most unexpected incident. He was arrested by the Prussian police, who accused him of preaching *Carbonarism*, nay, even suspected him of having come over for the express purpose of directing a plot against the government. His trial was made in due form, but the case was conducted secretly, and he did not even obtain leave to see the written evidence. He remained six months in prison, and was perhaps indebted for his release to Hegel, who interfered on his behalf with a great deal of eagerness and of friendship. One may imagine how this confinement, far from his native land, and the uncertainty hanging over his destiny, tormented

a man who had always kept aloof from political agitations,—a man of ardent imagination, of a haughty temper, and gifted with an incessant need of movement and expansion. He tells us that he was submitted to a severe *régime*; and it is not difficult to believe that in 1824 the dungeons of a Prussian fortress were no pleasant residence. He complained of “having suffered there from varicose veins”; and I feel no doubt that he considered himself as lost till Hegel arrived and offered him his assistance. Many a time has he told me, whilst relating this adventure with his pompous tragic manner,—“One thing alone preoccupied me: my translation of Plato was not finished.” Life was nothing for him in comparison. One cannot help smiling at these exaggerated alarms, but still we must acknowledge that the disappointment was a cruel one. His imprisonment lasted six months. He profited by this time to study German, and to read the works of Kant, Fichte, Jacobi, Hegel. He translated into French, but merely as a linguistic exercise, some poetry of Goethe, for whom he entertained a deep admiration, and whom he had visited at Weimar.

When it was known in France that this professor, already illustrious, notwithstanding his youth, surrounded by so much admiration and sympathy, whose popularity had been intensified—of course, in consequence of his destitution—was persecuted in Prussia on account of his liberal opinions, an outburst of anger broke out against the tyrannical government, and enthusiasm for the

martyr. How much greater that enthusiasm would have been, had they known the incident of the varicose veins! On his return to France, Cousin set himself quickly to work, went on with his translation of Plato, and did not make too much fuss about his position as a victim. He remembered it moderately, however, when M. de Martignac restored to him his chair of philosophy which he occupied in 1815, no longer giving him the title of deputy-lecturer, but that of fellow-professor with M. Royer-Collard. "I cannot help feeling a deep emotion," said he, "when I find myself again in this chair, to which I was called in 1815 by the choice of my illustrious master and friend, M. Royer-Collard. The first blows of a power which no longer exists removed me from it. I am happy and proud at occupying it to-day, on the return of the constitutional hopes of France (*cheers*), and, in my loyal gratitude, I feel the need of thanking publicly for that restoration the king and the government of my country. Whilst I cast my eyes around me, I can honestly say that, amidst the agitation of our times, amidst the chances of the political events with which I may have been mixed, my wishes have never wandered beyond the limits of this hall. Wholly devoted to philosophy, after having had the honour of suffering a little on its behalf, I now come to surrender to it without reserve what Heaven has in store for me of strength and of life."

That was a fine and noble language, as clever as it was noble. Cousin declared himself devoted to liberty before

an audience burning with liberal passions ; he associated himself to the popularity of the new cabinet—popularity which was immense ; he made much of his disinterestedness : in one word, he mentioned his destitution ; he alluded discreetly to the Prussian prisons. His mere presence in the chair from which he had been expelled seven years before, and the neighbourhood of M. Guizot, who at the same time was resuming his lectureship, filled these young hearts with joy. They found again their master and their idol, they found him heightened by persecution. The lecture was splendid, and the enthusiasm of the audience boundless. Cousin possessed neither Guizot's solidity nor Villemain's fluency ; but by his age—thirty-six—he was, of the three, the nearest to youth ; he was the representative, the chief, the inspirer of the new generation. He was known to be in straitened circumstances ; he had just been suffering. He discussed all the great questions which agitate men, and which were more than ever then, the topic of the day. He spoke of the perpetuity of philosophy, of its history, of history in general ; he composed over again, from the philosophic point of view, the *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, establishing philosophy on the basis of psychology, throwing light upon the progress of humanity by the development of philosophic thought, assigning to religion and to philosophy their distinct parts and their common aim, restoring to man the direction of human affairs assigned by Bossuet exclusively to God, dazzling by his theory on great men the minds still

quite filled by the Napoleonic epic. Such was the programme of the first year,—light thrown upon the most diverse questions ; doctrines extemporised, systems sketched, audacity often carried to the verge of rashness, the passions of young men over-excited, and horizons opened to them on all sides. In the course of the following year he sketched broadly the history of the various schools ; returning to Locke, after having visited the extreme East, he produced a refutation of the eighteenth century sensationalism which was both solid, conclusive, and, by a stroke of art, attractive. At this point the Revolution of 1830 stopped his teaching, and stopped it for ever.

Cousin was sincere when, on reascending his chair at the Sorbonne, he expressed his gratitude to the king and to the Martignac cabinet. That cabinet was liberal, inasmuch as it did not wish to return to the *ancien régime* and to clerical domination ; but it was, on the other hand, devoted to the elder branch of the Bourbon dynasty, and professed the greatest respect for religion, nay, for the clergy, provided the clergy remained within the sphere of its religious duties, and did not affect the pretension of meddling with politics. That was certainly Cousin's line of conduct. He had joined in 1815 the *volontaires royaux* ; he had publicly and on several occasions extolled the *Charter* ; he renewed that eulogy in 1826, in a passage of his *Fragments*, and that passage has remained famous. He praises the *Charter*, not only for the liberal views it contains, but for the whole of its

contents; he nearly looks upon it as the highest expression of political wisdom. Far from blaming it for proclaiming a state religion, he goes so far as to say, "it was necessary that it should be there." This word is somewhat strange for a philosopher. Expressing his situation by proper names, I should say of him that he was a liberal of the school of Royer-Collard, not that of Thiers or Mignet. To these two he said: "You are leading us to ruin."

He is not one of those who on the twenty-seventh were hostile to the days of July, and on the twenty-ninth avowed partisans of those days. As he had deplored the fight, so he regretted the victory. Often has he repeated to me, at the time when he had given his adhesion to the government of the younger branch, that a change of ministry would have sufficed. The Revolution had shaken the monarchical principle without any profit for liberty. Like the Duc de Broglie, and for the same reasons, he remained a simple witness of the struggle. He even went into the office of the *Globe* newspaper to express his disapprobation. Again, as the Duc de Broglie, when the Revolution became an accomplished fact, whilst regretting it, he accepted it. The public and the new government itself numbered him amongst the victors, and rewarded him for a triumph, which he would have prevented had he been able to do so.

If M. Guizot was in 1822 thrown on the side of the opposition by the violence of the government, that is certainly a proof of the difficulty which people who live

at the same time often have of understanding one another. Small things hide from them the important ones. M. Guizot was certainly a liberal, but still more a conservative. I say the same of M. Cousin. The liberals then were, above all, concerned about the struggle carried on by the clergy with philosophy; the church wanted either to domineer over philosophy or to suppress it. M. Cousin, who granted to the church the very title of state religion, with the advantages attached to it by the *Charter*,—who even allowed to it a very large share in the government of schools,—who would have liked to see an episcopal bench in the Chamber of Peers, maintained at the same time against the Ultramontanists the individual freedom and the independence of philosophy. He did not yield, and he has never yielded on these two points. As he held no political office under the Restoration, no one saw or scarcely took any notice of the concessions he made to the clergy; on the other hand, the reservations he made in favour of freedom were very clearly perceived. The success of his teaching was identical with that of the liberal party. The enemies felt that, and accordingly they struck at him in 1820. The friends felt it too, and proved it by their cheering. His destitution, in the first place, and then his imprisonment in Prussia, made of him a revolutionist *malgré lui*. Some one has said that men always end by having the opinions which they are accused of holding. M. Cousin, who is considered by many persons as being undecided and wavering in his views, seems to me, on the contrary,

to have been very consistent in his doctrine and upright in his way of acting. Those who pretended that he had been a Jacobin before being a ministerialist, accuse him of having been a Jacobin because others launched that accusation against him. There is no other reason for this charge, except perhaps one of those imprudent words which escape from the lips of an imaginative man, who spends his life in writing and in speaking. Yes, Cousin ever cherished in his heart a certain tenderness for the "last Brutus"; but if he had belonged to the Roman Senate, and if Brutus had been charged with the murder of Cæsar, Cousin would have condemned to death his favourite hero.

In June 1830 he was only assistant-lecturer at the Paris *Faculté des Lettres*; after July he became titular professor, member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, Councillor of State *en service extraordinaire*; during the same year he had been elected a member of the French Academy. On the foundation of the Academy of Ethical and Political Science in 1832, he was chosen to form part of it; at the same time he was called to the peerage. He was appointed, in 1840, Minister of Public Instruction in the cabinet presided over by M. Thiers.

I need not say with what feelings he saw the approaches of the Revolution of February. An eye-witness told me that he followed, dressed in a peer's costume, M. Odilon-Barrot to the Tuileries. The peer's costume is unlikely; the walk is a positive fact. He went there no doubt to assure the king of his fidelity, and perhaps also to give

his support to M. Thiers, M. de Rémusat, and M. Duvergier de Hauranne, his friends, who for a moment believed it possible to form a ministry with the assistance of M. Odilon-Barrot. On his return, he fell in with a troop of revolutionists, who were busy erecting a barricade. They asked him to contribute at least one stone. "I cannot," answered he; "how could I, seeing that the king has just named me one of his ministers?" This speech, and perhaps the peer's dress, if indeed it was there, disarmed them. There ended his *Odyssey*, which was, however, more courageous than his 1815 campaign as a *volontaire royal*. In 1815 he had in both camps friends and sympathetic opinions. Everything failed him in 1848. A revolution can always be stopped,—that is to say, one always ends by springing to life again, at the cost of more or less time and trouble. The Revolution of 1830 had been very quickly subdued. That of 1848 was of a graver character; it carried away, not a dynasty, but the monarchy, and threatened most seriously the whole social order. (Mind the next!) The royal council having been dissolved, the only tie which bound Cousin to the university was his lectureship at the *Faculté des Lettres*. He was pensioned off after the 1851 *coup d'état* (May 7th, 1852). They allowed him the use of his rooms, which Turgot had occupied before him as prior of Sorbonne. He henceforth busied himself with the books he wrote and those he possessed. He died at Cannes on the 13th of January 1867.

CHAPTER II.

COUSIN'S PHILOSOPHY.

PIERRE LEROUX has written against Cousin a pamphlet, very witty, very amusing, but extremely unfair. He accuses him naturally of being eclectic; he also charges him with not being so. "Cousin," he says, "declares that he is an eclectic; he affirms that he has had three masters—La Romiguière, Royer-Collard, and Maine de Biran. He has borrowed something from the two last, nothing from the first. What, then, comes of that famous principle, that every system is true by what it affirms, and false by what it denies?" Pierre Leroux is absolutely wrong. Cousin has borrowed much from La Romiguière; in the first place he is indebted to him for the habit of psychological observation; in the second, he has learnt from him to study and to know the phenomena of sensibility. He owes him more than to his other masters, since he owes to his initiation, method, and a great part of the facts of human nature upon which his system rests. La Romiguière has taught him sensation; Royer-Collard the intellect; Maine de Biran the will; or, rather, all three have opened his mind and supplied him with indications. It is his

own personal reflexions which have shown him man awakened first by sensations, applying to sensation the laws of his thought, and by his own will taking possession of himself for the purpose of judging and directing his own actions.

Pierre Leroux elsewhere acknowledges that Cousin's *man* is sensation, intellect, will. But we are confronting really three men ; three men studied separately, and who would also live separately, if in that isolation they could live. It is difficult to misunderstand more completely the doctrine which one attacks. Cousin is always repeating that the whole man is in the phenomena of which he is the theatre, the cause, and the spectator. His reflexion is more or less strong, but it is always excited, and the phenomena which might be produced in him without finding an echo in his conscience would be as if they did not exist. All analysis is a distinction, but all distinction does not imply separation. The simultaneity of our impressions, our actions, and our perceptions is one of the greatest psychological difficulties. The observer describes sensation, but since he describes it he sees it ; and he pays attention to it since he applies to it his method. Cousin knows so, he says it, and after analysing, he goes on to synthesis. When he has shown separately every phase of the phenomena, he sees that not one of them would be possible in that state of isolation : after having disconnected these elements, he connects them again.

What one might perhaps say of Cousin is that if he

was a sagacious, and sometimes a profound observer, he lacked patience. He has certainly understood the importance of psychology, and made it the substratum of his philosophy; but he has not, like Jouffroy and Maine de Biran, spent long years in looking into himself. During the first period of his teaching at the *École Normale*, he was ever discussing the questions of the origin of our ideas, an essentially psychological one; and Jouffroy, who was his pupil then, and who was specially engrossed by the problem of man's destiny, used to say melancholically, "He places philosophy in a hole." Jouffroy ended by getting accustomed to that *hole*, whilst Cousin cleared at one bound the Scotch school, and went to Germany to get initiated into the philosophy of nature.

Cousin had learnt Greek and Latin at college, where they were taught; but he had not learnt philosophy there, because it was not part of the school curriculum, and for the same reason he had learnt neither English nor German. A few persons in France knew English, but German and Germany were completely unknown. Now it was impossible for Cousin to remain in that state of ignorance. At the Sorbonne he lectured, not on philosophy, but on the history of philosophy. He had read Madame de Staël: he knew that Germany had become a powerful focus of ideas; if he knew not the doctrine of Kant, he was aware, at least, of the noise it created and the stir it had produced. He blushed a little for our country, and much for himself, at being obliged to know only by hearsay so important a move-

ment. Great curiosity and a most justifiable *point d'honneur* called him to Germany. He began by learning German, and learnt it very badly ; he ended by studying Kant in Born's barbarous Latin. That was a very thin stock with which he crossed to the other side of the Rhine in 1817.

There he found a very different world from our peaceful Sorbonne, where they still busied themselves in proving that there is nothing in the intellect which has not previously been in the senses, except the intellect itself. Kant had been dead for thirteen years, but he had disciples throughout the whole of Germany, and even the philosophers who founded rival schools were full of his spirit. They all tried their best to find the means of proving the existence of the *non-ego*, a problem which disturbed the souls of all the psychologists, whilst it left the rest of the world in the enjoyment of perfect peace. Like Plato, like Aristotle, like Descartes, like Leibnitz, and like M. Cousin, Kant thought that reason was not the result of sensation ; on the contrary, reason, awakened by sensation, produces contingent ideas, governs them, and links them together by submitting them to necessary ones. He studied and classified these necessary ideas, and the more necessary he felt them to be, the more difficult did it appear to him to ascertain whether that necessity, imposed upon the *ego* and to which the *ego* must yield, established anything except the existence and the mode of being of the *ego*. It is not impossible that we may be created so as to

believe in the existence of an imaginary *non-ego*. That was Berkeley's hypothesis; he had then said that we had no means of issuing from the *ego* for the purpose of judging it; consequently the *non-ego* would never be anything but a verisimilitude. According to Berkeley, there were many chances for the *non-ego* being nothing except a dream; but what did it signify to us its being a dream or a reality. since the dream produces upon us the same effect which reality could bring about? Kant did not feel satisfied with such an answer; he wanted something definite, and he had found in practical reason and in ethics a means of reassuring himself—means which seemed sufficient neither to Jacobi nor to Schelling.

Cousin returned to Germany in 1818, and his other journey, in 1824, cost him, as we have seen, a good deal. He saw all the professors,—those who remained faithful to Kant's solution, and those who were opening for themselves fresh paths. Everywhere he was well received. These learned men gave a cordial welcome to the young barbarian who came amongst them in quest of light. He spent some time with Jacobi, who charmed him by his easy manners and the pleasantness of his conversation. He attached himself particularly to Hegel, who did not repel him by his abruptness and his somewhat wild character;—Hegel, whose genius and lofty destinies he boasts that he was the first to discover. He likewise began a regular intercourse with Schleiermacher, who was above all a scholar, but that scholar had, so to

say, the *lining* of a philosopher, just as Cousin himself, by virtue of his eclecticism, was, or wished to be looked upon as, erudite. He allowed himself to be impregnated with German notions, he became madly fond of German ideas and habits, and especially of the German problem *par excellence*, the famous problem of Kant. Hegel, who had no mobility in him, admired the versatility of that young Frenchman, who, on his arrival in Germany, was merely a disciple of Reid and Dugald Stewart, and who now very nearly understood Kant, Fichte, Jacobi, Schelling, nay, Hegel himself; and thought himself qualified to pass judgment upon them. Cousin, on his return to Paris, felt transformed into a new man. Without forsaking the Scotch school and Maine de Biran, he introduced into his teaching all the ideas which were being discussed on the other side of the Rhine; he even added a few theories which he regarded as his own, and which, according to him, were to make the conquest of the *non-ego* a definite fact.

The principal of these theories was that of the impersonality of human reason. To succeed in establishing it, he first reviewed the various categories of reason, and reduced them to two,—the principle of substance and the principle of causality;—"reason is nothing else but the action of the two great laws of causality and of substance."

When I apply my reflexion to one of the acts of my intellect, I perceive immediately that it is impossible for me to conceive a phenomenon without placing it in a

substance, and referring it to a cause. But, says Kant, this impossibility is a law forced upon my intellect: I note that I am thus constituted; it does not follow that this cause and this substance exist out of me. The fact is, Cousin answers, that Kant sees the principles of reason only in their psychological manifestation; he sees that we see them, and that we cannot help seeing them; he does not behold them in themselves, independently of the intellect which they illumine. Kant is a philosopher and a psychologist; he is even the greatest of psychologists; he meditates deeply upon the forms of his thought; he discerns all its elements and all its shades. He forgets, or does not see, a state of humanity anterior to reflexion, and which Cousin designates as *spontaneity*, during which we perceive the principles of reason in themselves, not as the necessary laws of our thought, but as absolute truths existing *per se*, and not requiring to be conceived, in order to exist. This spontaneous perception of absolute truths, which establishes the faith of humanity, allows philosophers to avoid the grasp of Kant's scepticism.

It is no doubt difficult to decide what spontaneity is, because as soon as we set about studying it, it disappears, and makes way for reflexion. But it evidently exists at the dawn of all intellectual life; it reproduces itself at intervals, in the course of our career, after man has begun to reflect; and the philosopher can even find it again by a supreme effort, like those flashes of light to which Aristotle alludes in the twelfth book of his *Meta-*

physis, and which at times illuminate our darkness. Thus the *noûs* ceases to appear to us as a mere hypothesis, and becomes a reality.

"Reason is in some sort as the bridge thrown between psychology and ontology, between conscience and existence : it rests upon both at once ; it descends from God, and bends towards man ; it appears to conscience as a guest bringing to it news from an unknown world, of which it gives to it both the idea and the design."

When philosophy, having passed through reflexion, returns to spontaneity, it brings there the brilliancy of light. "Universal harmony enters man's thought, develops and calms it. The divorce between ontology and psychology, speculation and observation, science and common-sense, ceases by reaching a method which arrives at speculation through observation, and to ontology through psychology, in order to strengthen afterwards observation by speculation, psychology by ontology, and which, springing from the immediate data of that conscience which is the common-sense of the human race, draws from it science ; now science contains nothing but common-sense, but it raises it to a severer and purer form, and gives to it an account of itself."

Cousin, whom I am merely quoting, thus spoke to the public at large. He was accused of being cloudy. This was the fault of his hearers and of his situation, rather than his own. He was clear, nay, very clear, but his clearness was that of a metaphysician, not that of every-

body. The splendour of his eloquence attracted the crowd, whilst the thoughts he expressed were only meant for the few.

Once satisfied as to the existence of the *non-ego*, thanks to the impersonality of reason, and, thanks to this discovery, ontology having henceforth a safe substratum, the next thing is to organise ontology as a science, and, in the first place, to find God. That is easy, and His existence is proved from the fact that we have a notion of Him.

God is present in every intellectual act. Man cannot think without *thinking himself*; nor can he think himself without thinking the *non-ego*; further, he cannot conceive the *ego* and the *non-ego* otherwise than as causes, nor conceive these causes otherwise than in a substance; and as that makes two causes and two substances, now these causes cannot be really substantial, because their phenomenality and their contingency take away from them all absolute and substantial character; and also, from the fact of being two, they limit each other, and thus exclude each other from the rank of substance; reason must then necessarily refer them to one substantial cause, beyond which there is nothing to seek, so far as existence is concerned, so far, I mean, as cause and substance are in question; for "existence is the identity of both." We are thus in possession of the *ego*, the *non-ego*, and God at the very starting of our intellectual life. Cousin expressed this conclusion by the following formula: "As soon as the first fact of conscience mani-

feats itself, the psychological unity in its triplicity stands, so to say, face to face with the ontological unity in its parallel triplicity," which are the finite, the infinite, and their mutual relations.

God there appears to us as substance and cause of the world, as the world can only be in a substance and through a cause. On the other hand, can God exist without the world? Is it possible to conceive the infinite without the finite? the cause independently of the effect? the absolute cause without the total effect? If by an impossible hypothesis, we fancy God without the world, it is a God who can be cause, but is not. In Him, as in the world, there is a tendency to *become*. Movement, variety, *before* and *after*, may be found, all ideas incompatible with that of absolute perfection. "The God of conscience is not an abstract God, a solitary King relegated beyond creation, on the throne of a silent eternity, and an absolute existence which resembles the very negation of existence. He is a God both true and real, both substance and cause, always substance and always cause, being substance only inasmuch as He is cause, and cause inasmuch as He is substance, that is to say, being absolute cause; one and several, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, individuality and totality; principle, end, and centre; at the summit of being, and at its lowest stage; infinite and finite at once; finally, triple, that is to say—God, nature, and humanity."

The above sentence has remained famous, because it

has been quoted in many sermons directed against eclecticism. It is no doubt a magnificent sentence. All Cousin's doctrine is explained in splendid language. He seems obscure, because his ideas are novel and abstract. He is pompous, because the majesty of the theme requires it, and because the soul gets excited and rises, in the presence of what is great and novel. *Asia Pieridum*. Cousin's enemies fancied they saw pantheism in his teaching, and it is difficult not to say that they were right. What is pantheism, but belief in the unity of substance and of cause, *natura naturans*? A God who is at once God, nature, and humanity, is he not the veritable God of Spinoza? If God is not all, He is not God; so says Cousin. Therefore God is all. Cousin says elsewhere that God cannot exist without being comprehensible, and cannot be understood without containing in Him, together with unity and immutability, diversity and movement, that is to say, the world. "If God is absolutely indivisible in Himself, He is inaccessible and, consequently, incomprehensible; now this incomprehensibility is His destruction."

Cousin seems later on to return to the incomprehensible God of the Christian Church, to the absolute unity of the Alexandrine and Eleatic schools, to the doctrine of Creation, even of creation *ex nihilo*. But this creation does not introduce a separation between the two substances. God creates, and He creates from nothing, just as I create my own actions from nothing, since they are the result of my free will. His com-

parison, by interpreting the word *creation*, destroys it. The world, in these conditions, is distinct but not separated from Him, and the freedom of my actions, by virtue of the system, exists in me only because of my imperfection. God, who, as some say, must create, could not create otherwise.

After having described and explained humanity, Cousin describes and explains the human species ; as he has written the history of man, so he writes that of the species. There he finds the same law and the same progress. Just as, in man, he has proceeded from psychology to ontology, so he begins the history of humanity by the history of thought, that is to say, the history of science. Divine science, which is the word or λόγος, corresponding to perfection, and perfect like it, embraces the totality of the being, and is the totality of science ; whilst human science, which aspires after the Divine one, and constantly tends towards it by its efforts and its developments, is progressive, instead of being perfect. It is in motion as everything which is finite. It starts from the lowest to reach the highest. It attaches itself first to sensation ; then, gathering strength as it goes along, it studies reason, and passes on from sensationalism to idealism. There it is that doubt seizes it, because it stands face to face with a host of difficult problems. It doubts reason, not only on account of reason's seeming contradictions, but because of its necessity, its subjectivity. But as it cannot live in a state of doubt, it comes forth from it by the spontaneous

intuition of truth, whether that intuition proceeds from religion, from poetry (which is the same thing), or from philosophy, having arrived at its most perfect form by the destruction of personality. Such are the four great systems which fill the history of thought,—sensationalism, idealism, scepticism, mysticism.

These systems occupy also the history of societies. Societies begin by simple faith; they pass through seasons of analysis and discussion, which themselves end in criticism and negation; finally, they are saved through the affirmation of a superior faith. The most perfect manifestation, both of philosophy and of society, results from the conciliation of all the elements of the previous periods in a definitive synthesis. A man appears who—writer, general, or lawgiver—exercises over mankind sufficient empire to lead it on from decay to renascence, from renascence to criticism, and from criticism to the full possession of itself. The part played by great men is a providential one; by their means God brings about His designs. Success is the sign of genius. Humanity at its commencement is simple, on account of its vicinity to nature; it becomes complex when the progress of reason and of civilisation brings along with it the progress of sciences and arts; philosophical analysis, by diffusing light, by establishing democracy, suppressing prejudices, and placing religions and traditions amongst prejudices, substitutes a period of erudition to that of creation. Progress consists in calling back differences to life again, and subordinating them to one another. It

is the era of constitutional governments. Napoleon, who suppressed individuality, only created fictitious unity; the *Charter* establishes the true unity by acknowledging differences, by settling them, by placing them in subordination to justice, by arranging them according to a studied and beneficent hierarchy. The mischief of the Restoration consisted in substituting for the hierarchy of rights the renewal of privileges; it rendered the Revolution of July almost inevitable. In their turn, the victors of July committed the mistake of making a *revolution* instead of a mere *evolution*. The elder branch of the Bourbons should have been kept, but under the salutary yoke of justice. After 1830, the *Charter* is lessened, because the transmission of the royal power is less infallible; it is improved, inasmuch as the principle of diversity in equality is more efficaciously upheld. The duty of good citizens and of sound philosophers consists in adhering to a form of government which renders the conquests of reason definitive through the solid establishment of order and liberty.

Such, viewed as a whole, is M. Cousin's system. Psychology as a starting point, eclecticism as method. Then, as for doctrines, the following:—reduction of the categories of reason to the principles of substance and of causality; the existence of the *non-ego* founded upon the impersonality of reason; a free, intelligent, personal God, *necessary*, and *necessarily* cause; a code of ethics having for conditions liberty, for rule, duty, for sanction, the immortality of the soul; for philosophy of the history of

philosophy we must have the constant and regular succession of the four primordial systems ; the glorification of success is the philosophy of the history of humanity ; finally, as a political organisation, instead of variety without unity, which is anarchy, or unity without variety, which is despotism, we shall have unity in variety, that is to say, a society made up according to the scheme of nature.

This scheme embraces all. It goes through the whole cycle of philosophy, from metaphysics to politics. It solves all the problems which divided thinkers at the beginning of this century. It refutes the doctrines of Locke, revived with great modifications by Condillac and the *idéologues* ; it solves, or pretends to solve, the important problem laid down by Kant to psychologists and metaphysicians ; it decides on the relations between God and the world, on the law of human life, on the law of human societies. Just as it discusses all sorts of questions, so it consults all schools—the contemporary French ones, the Scotch and the German ones, the French and foreign ones of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ; the mediæval epoch, the school of Alexandria more particularly, the Hellenic schools and Oriental philosophy. M. Cousin maintains that, as far as doctrine goes, every system is true by what it affirms, and false to the amount only of what it denies : every system contains a portion of truth, and all the systems combined give the whole truth ; the thing therefore is not to try and discover it, but to reunite all the elements scattered here and there.

In like manner for politics : there is right and wrong mixed together in every form of government, when one of the complex elements of which society consists is forgotten, sacrificed, placed in a position which is not assigned to it by nature. We should borrow from the one the principle of perpetuity, stability, authority ; from the other, the principle of progress ; have an aristocracy which is legitimate under certain conditions, and necessary, besides, to the working of the government ; secure to democracy equality in its relations with justice ; guarantee to it the right and the means of rising through capacity and industry : in one word, frame a government which shall make all the governments hitherto accustomed to be in a perpetual state of antagonism, live harmoniously together. That system, where all questions are solved by the same principles and the same method, is *eclecticism*. It is a thorough mistake to say that M. Cousin has only given fragments of a system, and fragments which often contradict one another. There are few systems so complete, embracing so many details, and bringing those details so easily and so faithfully to one sole principle. I acknowledge the beauty, the breadth, and the splendid harmony of the system ; I must say at the same time that many of the propositions of which that philosophy consists are either false or contestable.

I thoroughly agree with M. Cousin in his refutation of Locke ; at the time when he wrote it, Locke, in France, was a power ; he renders justice to him, and he judges him, too. The Locke whom he describes is the real one.

We see clearly the sage, the moderate man with his upright intentions, his kindly doctrine; the sagacious observer, hard-working, completely unprejudiced, not running after novelty, but not avoiding it when it presents itself; faithful to common-sense not only so far as it is true and useful, but also when it is superficial and vulgar, like unto those powerful philosophers alluded to by Joseph de Maistre, who are afraid of ghosts, and think themselves practical men *par excellence*, because they never see but half reality. M. Royer-Collard had already claimed authoritatively the rights of reason; M. Cousin did so with much brilliancy, and this refutation, which would have been dry coming from another man's lips, was attractive and most powerful coming from his.

He believed he had led to great progress in psychology by reducing to two the principles of reason, and leaving causality and substance alone as irreducible factors. I agree with him when he says that the senses do not give the notion of cause, but only that of phenomena. Conscience can give us cause as well as the succession of psychological phenomena, but it does not tell us that no phenomenon can be produced except by a cause and in a substance; for there is nothing either in conscience or in the senses which contains necessity either expressly or virtually. But I ask M. Cousin whether it is not exactly the same case with what is just and what is beautiful?

The senses and the conscience give me only the impression of pleasure and pain. They can never suggest

to me the idea of sacrifice. They cannot prove to me the necessity of sacrifice, because nothing necessary results from their operations. By collecting together observations we may form a general law; but if the law is thus formed, it is merely a *résumé*, a total; it is not a rule. The voice, which in certain cases orders me to prefer pain rather than pleasure, and to sacrifice my interest, and even my life, to the interest of the community, is an inward voice which resounds in the depths of my reason, and which speaks a language different from that of the world. I have learnt at the school of M. Cousin that so soon as liberty comes into play, duty imposes itself upon it; but duty cannot be deduced from liberty, since it is its lord and master. How is it possible that this principle, proceeding as it does from reason alone, should derive from the principle of causality, or from that of substance, unless it is by the metaphysical reason that an idea resides naturally in a substance, and that the eternal idea is to be found in the eternal substance? I grant that it is in the substance, but the notion I entertain of it is absolutely different from the notion I have of substance. It differs quite as much from the idea I have of cause, although I may be led by a series of metaphysical speculations to believe that there is no other reality, and consequently no other production, no other cause than that which is in the order of what is good. This very speculation, by which some thinkers would wish to reduce the idea of what is good to that of cause, originates with the notion of what

is good, and results from the perception, more and more distinct and precise, which we form of it through reflexion. I say the same of the idea of the beautiful, which is quite different from the sense of the present and the agreeable. It is not by the often-repeated experience of my sensations that I train my senses ; it is by the conception of an ideal independent of me and of all human intellect, an ideal which humanity understands better in proportion as it rises and purifies itself, but which it can neither produce nor alter.

M. Cousin naturally attached a very great importance to the solution he thought he had discovered of Kant's great problem. He had with much reason distinguished two states in psychological phenomena : the spontaneous and the reflexive. The phenomenon produces itself at first in the former one, that is to say, we see that it produces itself, but in some sort without paying attention to it, and immediately, by a natural reaction which requires on our part no effort of the will, we take a more complete possession of it. The analysis of these two successive states of the soul is difficult, because attention is not completely absent even from the phenomena upon which we do not bestow our attention. If the soul did not perceive them at all, they would be in it absolutely as if they did not exist. In the state of spontaneity the soul has a confused perception of these phenomena ; in the state of reflexion it has of them a precise perception. It is only a difference, a degree, or, to speak more correctly, a shade. In order to make myself understood

I shall carry the two situations to their extreme. It sometimes happens that a word is said to us which we do not understand. Our interlocutor has closed his lips when we perceive what he has said. Between the sensation which this word has produced and the knowledge we have of the existence of that sensation in us, an interval has elapsed; and if that knowledge has thus succeeded only after an interval to the modification of our sensibility which is the object of it, it is not through our will, since that will could not be excited by a phenomenon which, so far as our conscience was concerned, did not exist. It appears already from the above instance that a sensation and an idea can produce themselves in us spontaneously. Let us suppose that at the same moment our attention is turned aside to another object; that idea, purely spontaneous, will have crossed our mind as a dream, and most often without leaving any trace in our memory. The case the most opposite to this results from methodical observation. Not only are we attentive to an impression because it is a strong one, and excites in us the will of dwelling upon it, and of thoroughly investigating it: we also form the resolution of knowing scientifically its nature and its character; with that view we hold it fast, we produce it, we modify it, inquiring into its origin, noting its variations, comparing its different aspects. There is a spontaneous fact, and a reflexive one, totally different from one another. We can easily fill by thought the interval which separates them. This is an ingenious remark, and we can deduce

from its consequences interesting from a psychological point of view; it seems, however, that we have not to deal here, properly speaking, with two states of the soul, but with two *nuances*; for even in the spontaneous state the soul is attentive, although the attention it gives is not concentrated. Reflexion is in some sort only an intensified attention. Now, if I am not mistaken here, and if an impression not perceived is null, it follows that duality exists in all psychological impression, and if duality exists, the problem exists likewise, and is as hard to solve for the spontaneous as for the reflexive state.

What I say here, especially for impressions produced upon the senses, is not less true for those which are the result of reason. Certain ideas present themselves to us by the natural force of reason: such is the doctrine of all rationalist philosophers; they can do so only on the occasion of a phenomenon. In other words, if reason was not there they could not exist; if the phenomenon was absent, they could not be seen. That is M. Cousin's own teaching. Reason is the faculty of the infinite, just as the senses and conscience are the faculties of the finite; but the senses and conscience cannot produce an idea independently of reason, which, in its turn, cannot perceive the ideas latent in it, without the help of the discursive faculties. The whole man is in each of man's phenomena: sensation, intellect, will, and the whole intellect is in each intellectual phenomenon, the senses, conscience, reason; the finite, the infinite, and their

relations to each other. Cousin sees perfectly well the unity of man, he proclaims it very loudly ; but he sees also the variety, and states it with equal force. Whether he treats of psychology, metaphysics, history, or politics, his constant study is to discover unity in variety and variety in unity ; he aims at distinguishing and analysing, without separating ; examining in succession the different elements of life, insisting on this capital point, that all these elements coexist in life, and in each phenomenon of life ; that they contribute to form it, and that life is nothing else but the simultaneous development of all these faculties which make up our individuality. If such is his doctrine—and that point is beyond doubt—how can he come and speak to us of an expiring conscience, and of a reason which embraces eternal truths without any interference of the *ego* and of the conscience ? When he speaks thus, he is no longer a disciple of Descartes, but of Proclus. It is not the language of a rationalist, but that of a mystic. He introduces a word instead of an idea. When the conscience expires, man expires likewise. It is only the thought of God of which it may have been said, that is the thought of thought, because producing its own thought, and none else, it has no object distinct from itself. But even the Alexandrines who came after Aristotle, placed thought at the second rank of the Divine Trinity for the reason that in every intellectual act there is both a subject and an object, even when the *thinking* subject and the thought *object* are one and the same infinite. The expiration of conscience, I

maintain, is the expiration of knowledge. Whether that spontaneous intuition is anterior to reflexion, as it really is, or whether it produces itself after reflexion by a kind of inspiration like the *ἐνθουσιασμοί* of the Alexandrines, Cousin cannot appeal to the first state, because that would be subordinating philosophy to ignorance ; nor to the second, for that would be doing away with reason altogether on behalf of mysticism. His solution is nothing but an illusion. When he affirms that every thought contains the inseparable perception of the *ego* and the *non-ego*, and that the perception of every phenomenon, whether outward or inward, supposes the simultaneous affirmation of a substance which both contains and produces it, Cousin shirks the difficulty of passing from the *ego* to the *non-ego*, and that of the creation of the finite by the infinite, by substituting the greater difficulty of confounding the *ego* and the *non-ego*, the finite and the infinite, in the unity of substance and of cause.

In truth, philosophy states, describes, analyses, rather than explains. It traces a phenomenon to its cause ; that is not a complete explanation, but only the beginning of one. That is all it can do. In everything, the *how* escapes from its cognisance. I know that the world, being infinite, does not exist *per se*, and that it exists through the operation of the infinite. But how the infinite produces the finite is what I do not know. In everything I must begin by an act of faith, or take refuge in scepticism. To the problem of Kant, and to that which

Cousin is about to state on creation, I have no other answer than Galileo's: "*E pur si muove.*"

Whilst philosophers endeavoured to find again the world which Kant had deprived them of, many serious minds, who felt no doubt whatever about its existence, had doubts with respect to the existence of God. France during many years had had no religious worship, or only a clandestine one. It had been destitute of schools. The enlightened classes had learned from Rousseau, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (and Robespierre?) a natural religion, which was nothing else but Christianity *minus* its mysteries and its revealed character. For them it was rather a sentiment than a belief; the politicians accepted it as an instrument, a social necessity. Even Catholicism was nothing else for the First Consul when he re-established it. The restoration of public worship made by him in 1802 seemed to many of his followers, and even of his courtiers, nothing else but a piece of hypocrisy and a reaction towards the *ancien régime*. Atheism through reflexion was taught by several *idéologues*; atheism as the result of indifference was widely spread in the *bourgeoisie* and in the army. Young men it was, more than those of maturer age, who felt agitated by the need of believing, or at least of accounting for what the world unfolded before them. The imperial university, by virtue of its constitution, took the Catholic doctrine as the basis of its teaching. All those who were born with the century, learned that doctrine at school or at college. In the bosom of their

family they almost invariably found a father who professed either atheism or indifference. Hence for these young souls the anxiety of which I am speaking. Even politics got mingled with that state of things, all royalists either believing, or pretending to believe. To the great indignation of the liberals, the clergy had an important part in the direction of public affairs. It seemed equally impossible to believe what the clergy taught and to contend with the clergy itself. Were you a spiritualist without being a Christian, you fell under the suspicion of joining the anti-revolutionist ranks, in the eyes of certain dissatisfied people, and in those of the survivors of the old Revolutionary party. Romanticism, when it appeared, introduced a fresh element. It was neither the orthodoxy of M. de Bonald, nor M. de Châteaubriand's poetry of Christianity; it was the poetry of Christian art, and more particularly of Gothic architecture. There was a religion of the stone enclosure within which the Emperor had re-established the religion of Christ, as if to create and consecrate the religion of Cæsar. Between 1815 and 1830, the question in the *salons* was, "What do you think about God?"

Jouffroy entered the *École Normale* in 1815 with the longing desire of knowing what the philosophers would say to him on that subject. We know that Cousin spoke to him solely about the origin of ideas, whereat he exclaimed: "Philosophy is in a hole!" My generation, twenty years later, was haunted by the same thoughts. What! God has wished to create? The infinite has

wished to produce the finite? There has been a God previous to creation, and a God subsequent to it? A God different from Himself? God, perfect as He is, has *willed* the imperfect creature? He has *willed* it criminal? The problem of the Fall, the problem of Redemption, and what I might call the problem of the Sacraments, disturbed our slumbers. We found little assistance outside. At college, at the *École Normale*, the refutation of Locke-sensationalism was still going on. The priests, in the exhortations they purposely addressed to us, gave to us little else but rhetoric. The cleverest amongst them repeated Châteaubriand. Like Jouffroy, we asked the solution of our difficulties from the philosophers, from Jouffroy himself, but chiefly from Cousin, who was our oracle.

Cousin admitted the infinite. The whole of his metaphysical and his psychological systems were full of it. He maintained with great care the distinction between philosophy and religion, upheld with unwavering firmness the independence of philosophy, but at the same time proclaimed the necessity of religion. His own metaphysical belief did not differ from Christian metaphysics; so, at least, he thought, and so he wished. In his lectures, and in the various philosophical works which he published down to 1830, God is everywhere, whilst creation and providence are scarcely mentioned. You seldom find these words introduced, and when they are so, it is the texture of the sentence, not reflexion, which brings them. He was one of those whom the term *creation*

frightens, because it expresses a fact which, being analogous to no other, and not being capable of explanation for want of analogy, seems, accordingly, impossible and absurd. Really, human science explains the *How* of nothing. It gets out of every difficulty by comparisons. Wherever comparisons are impossible, it launches into blind faith, or into negation, which is blinder still, if we come to think about it. Cousin fancied he had solved every problem when he said that the world is just as necessary to God as God is to the world,—a statement which is very much like Spinoza's *natura naturans*. Throughout Catholic society there was against him a loud outcry of pantheism. He defended himself with much care, skill, and eloquence in his preface of 1820. The fact is, that if pantheism was not a crime in philosophy, where all opinions have an equal right to hold their ground, it was a crime then in the university and in the state. Cousin maintains strongly that he has always taught the existence of liberty both in God and in us, which implies an existence not only distinct but separate. Pierre Leroux and his followers on the one side, and the Catholics on the other, then maintained against him that if his defence succeeded in establishing separate causes, which was not very certain, it no wise established the plurality of substance. In his defence he was full of denunciations against Spinoza, but his doctrine was full of Spinozism. The clearest conclusion of all was that he held pantheistic views, that it was his interest to prove the contrary, and that he honestly believed that he was

not a pantheist, because whilst admitting the principle of pantheism, he declined to accept its consequences, nay, he condemned them.

For my part, as far as clearness goes, I cannot see what is gained by preferring pantheism to creation. Let us leave entirely aside the foolish accusations of immorality levelled against pantheists. It is in metaphysics especially, and in disputes between metaphysicians, that we find what may be called *procès de tendance* flourishing. If I had to name a moralist perfectly pure and irreproachable, I would quote Cousin, who is a pantheist; and I should not mind saying that Spinoza, who is still more of a pantheist, or who is more decidedly so, was a saint. But could Cousin really believe in the intelligibility of the following doctrine:—a world not necessary in itself, yet eternally necessary to God; a world essentially changeful, and produced eternally by a Being of whom unchangeableness is the principal attribute; a world where everything is imperfect, where evil has so great a part, and which is the necessary manifestation of perfect intelligence and infinite power? After having stated in magnificent language the unity, the eternity, the unchangeable nature of God, how could he, on the very next page, in equally magnificent expressions, affirm that that same God cannot reign as a solitary monarch; that the finite and evil are necessary to His perfection; that they are in Him, which is almost tantamount to saying that they are identical with Himself? He found the same affirmation in Saint Augustine,—a fortunate discovery,

rhaps, for a pleader ; but what is such an argument worth on the lips of a philosopher ?

From this argument itself, as he confessed, he proclaimed the unity of substance. Did he establish the duality of cause as strongly as he fancied ? When he asserts that he makes of God a free cause, does he not seem to forget those famous pages where he says that it is equally necessary for God to create, and for the world to have a creator ? In his article on Xenophanes and the Eleatic school, published first in the *Biographie Universelle*, and which has become one of his best books, there is a curious passage where he begins by supposing, in agreement with his whole doctrine, that there is only one substance, namely God, substance and cause at once, and that all the phenomena which constitute the changeful figure of the world are produced by that substance. Although these phenomena exist in His substance and proceed from His will, they are distinguished, nay, separate from Him ; but to what extent ? to whom does unity belong ? Is it especially to the world, as the Ionians thought, or is it to God, as the Eleates maintained ? For the Ionians God is hardly anything but the sum of phenomena ; for the Eleatic school the world is merely a dream, a shadow, a vain phantom. And yet—the expression escapes from his lips—these two solutions are equally natural ; in other words, he cannot choose between them. In effect, at the end of this article he proposes that we should return to the creed of common sense ; the last word of science, therefore, is an abdication.

He practised in his philosophical life the doctrine laid down in this article. We have seen him declare that the incomprehensibility of God was tantamount to His destruction, and that He would be necessarily incomprehensible if He remained absolutely indivisible; then we have seen him incline towards the perfect unity of the Alexandrines and of the Eleates, whilst at the same time he was seeking the solution of the problem of ontological reality in the expiration of reflexion, that is to say, in unification. Finally, after having oscillated between Spinoza and Xenophanes, he appeals suddenly to common-sense, to the old faith of our fathers—preserving untouched his belief in the dogmas, and giving up the idea of explaining them by system. That is what I call renouncing metaphysics without renouncing natural religion. As far as systems go, Cousin's scepticism is barely disguised; as far as doctrines are concerned, his faith is trusting and absolute. I curtail the objections, just as I have curtailed the *résumé* of the system, and I aim at giving only indications. It is the man chiefly whom I study in M. Cousin.

There are only praises to be given to the fundamental principles of his ethics. He is a great and a pure moralist. He has not, like some of his disciples, sounded to their depths the laws of ethics. But Franck, Caro, Janet, who will leave in that branch of science a luminous track, proceed immediately from him. He has proclaimed the true principles with the greatest firmness; he has developed them in that splendid

language of which he held the secret, and which raises and strengthens the soul. Here again we must remember that he tore us away from the honest but limited school of the *idéologues*—from a school whose precepts were true and whose principles were false. For the first time since a long series of years, duty was traced back to its real source, namely reason, and studied in its true character, namely as an inviolable and absolute rule. Sentiment was assigned its appropriate place, as a useful auxiliary which can never be but an auxiliary, good to make obedience easy, but never intended to usurp the position of the master. He has admirably summed up his ethical doctrine in his book entitled *du Vrai, du Beau, et du Bien*, where he has stated all that we should preserve of him, and all that he wishes us to preserve. But as for ethics, at any rate, he has had nothing to destroy, nothing to alter. Whenever an ethical question occurred, under his pen or in his oral teaching, he treated it in the same spirit, that is, with assurance, firmness, and sobriety. I shall only find fault with him on one point, a serious one, it is true. It is what he himself called the glorification of success, a theory with which he connects that of *necessary* men.

How is it possible to reconcile the doctrine of duty, which is so often that of sacrifice, with the absolution of success? and how separate success from force? Right does not exist, if it is not invincible. How can one establish, side by side with right, the duty of obedience to force? If the triumph of force is its absolution, there is

between crime and virtue no other difference but that of dimension. As soon as we stray from the absolute sovereignty of right and duty, which are the two human manifestations of Divine justice, we fall into the morality of fluctuations, that is to say, the very opposite of morality. Up to his Russian campaign no man was ever more crowned with success than Bonaparte ; therefore no man ever had more genius for the space of fifteen years, and greater right to enforce obedience. What is that morality? What is that philosophy of history? A cannon-shot fired at Waterloo transfers to another man both genius and the right of imposing obedience. He was a great and legitimate ruler only up to that time. Cousin may say what he likes, but the theory of success is the contradiction of duty, just as the theory of providential men is the contradiction of liberty. Some persons wish for freedom in metaphysics and politics whilst admitting fatality in history !

It is Cousin, the same man, who pronounced this dangerous word : We must forgive heroes the stepping-stool of their greatness ; and this other one : There were no vanquished at Waterloo.

There was one vanquished at Waterloo, namely Napoleon ; I shall show presently that there was another. But Cousin means that Napoleon is not, or is no longer identified with France. He is no longer strong enough to govern, therefore he has no more right to do so. He began, in Russia, to be vanquished ; therefore his greatness has disappeared. Could it be possible to speak

otherwise if one confounded justice with selfishness? Cousin loses his way in his historical doctrine, whilst following Hegel. He is much truer, much more himself in his ethical teaching, which his historical one contradicts. His heart never was on the side of Napoleon, even when Napoleon was successful, and when his genius seemed infallible. He felt that he was the enemy of right. In the latter years of the Empire, when frenzy of absolute power seized hold of the soldier of Vendémiaire and Brumaire, Cousin saw in him the enemy of his country. At that fatal date, all hearts and all minds were upset, even the greatest. One starts for Ghent; another, by an act quite as decisive, although more obscure, joins the *volontaires royaux*; he goes to Vincennes with the view of fighting against the enemy of freedom and of helping the enemy of his country. Both said: "*Ubi libertas, ibi patria.*" Posterity has seen more clearly, it has more satisfactorily unravelled the elements of so complex a situation. It stands up for the country against foreign rule. Foreign invaders once defeated and expelled, it would have been for right against despotism.

There were two vanquished at Waterloo,—Bonaparte, whose ruin we could get over; and France, about whom we ought still to be inconsolable. Without 1815 we should not have had 1870. Sedan is the *to-morrow* of Waterloo. Cousin's word, which was almost impious, had the effect of increasing his reputation; instead of seeing in it a twofold historical blunder and a moral one, people saw in it only an explosion of patriotism. It

sounded like a *tranche*. Men are led about by flags and words more than by arguments and by reason. On the day when Gambetta found his word (his first one)—“We are the irreconcilable”—he travelled half the way to glory. And Proudhon, with his great talent and his powerful discussions, which no one reads now,—Proudhon is wholly in these two expressions: “God, begone!” and “Property is theft.” He regretted these words: they made him suffer: he withdrew them. To Baroche, who said, “You don’t believe in God?” he answered, “What do you know about that?” But what was to be done? Those two words had bestowed upon him the consecration of atheism and communism. A tribune can *make words*, especially when he is merely a tribune. The duty of a philosopher is to be more circumspect. Imagination is his enemy. Hence the expression applied to Cousin by a powerful but hostile critic,—that he was less a philosopher than a philosophical orator.

He had perhaps yielded to his taste for the oratory of brilliant formulæ, when he produced his theory, long deemed irrefutable, and now somewhat unfashionable, of the alternation of the four systems: every epoch beginning by sensationalism, then rising to idealism, passing through scepticism, and finally casting itself into the arms of mysticism. This is witty and brilliant; it is not true. It is the romance of philosophy. Pythagoras and the Eleates are greater idealists than Plato; Plato only at a late period approaches the Alexandrines; his immediate successor is Aristotle. For the sake of

maintaining his theory, Cousin was obliged to transform the Stoics into spiritualists. He was more at his ease with the mediæval schools, because, not knowing anything about them, he had no difficulty in forcing them into his classifications.

I do not mean to say that he was deficient in philosophical erudition. He was not the equal of Schleiermacher, nor was he a d'Ansse de Villoison. His brains were busy with other matters but philological discoveries ; yet he had translated Plato, edited Descartes and Proclus ; he has written beautifully and often on Abélard. There were strange deficiencies in his learning. I can testify that after having translated nearly the whole of Plato, he knew Aristotle only through M. Ravaisson's work. The translation of the twelfth book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which he published in 1837, is an exercise which I wrote in 1836, whilst I attended his lecture-room. I used to read my work to him ; he made very few alterations, frequently unhappy ; one could see that he was new in that study. When, after having a deeper acquaintance with Aristotle, I read over again our joint work, I found in it many wrong meanings. Cousin knew Greek, but as a *littérateur*, not as a scholar ; and the Greek of Aristotle is almost a distinct language. There is not an Hellenist who understands Aristotle so well as Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, who is not, strictly speaking, a Greek scholar. Cousin was led to translate Plato in consequence of his tastes as a great writer and a spiritualist philosopher ; it is also by reflexion that he

edited Proclus and Descartes. His books on Abélard and Pascal are merely incidents in his life—a manuscript discovered, a controversy in which he was engaged. Proclus, on the other hand, was the work of his heart. He was studying in the Alexandrine philosophers the doctrine of unity and that of the Trinity. Here it is, more than in Leibnitz, that he found eclecticism.

He identified himself with the eclectic method which gave its name to his philosophy. What is eclecticism? It is a great deal, and it is nothing. It is like *opportunism*, which no one can reject when we consider it in its beginning, but which no one can accept if we follow it to its ultimate consequences. Does opportunism simply mean that everything should be done *in the opportune moment*? That is a truism (*une vérité de La Palice*). If, on the contrary, it means that we must change according to circumstances, and prefer the opinion which brings profit with it, then it is an infamous doctrine.

In like manner, everyone will accept eclecticism, if it consists in borrowing from each school its true and sensible elements; but *professional* eclectics go a little more deeply. They begin by stating as a principle that every system is true by what it affirms, and false by what it denies. This seems very profound, whereas it is only a meaningless play on the words. You say that materialism is true by what it affirms, because it affirms that matter exists, and it defines scrupulously its attributes; it is false by what it denies, because the

spiritual world exists, although it denies its existence. Very well. In order that the statement should be correct, it would be necessary that spiritualism implied the negation of matter. And what about scepticism? As it affirms nothing, how can it be true in what it affirms? It is true when it doubts of what is doubtful, and false when it doubts of what is certain. That is what should be said, to speak the truth, and what a fine discovery that would be! Let us now take mysticism: what is the element of truth it contains? On one side, it denies reason; on the other, it affirms the ecstatic state, and its *clairvoyance*. It is mistaken from beginning to end. What becomes of the formula? Let us take an instance from a more special doctrine, that of Malebranche. Malebranche denies the direct action of mind upon matter. There he is wrong. He affirms physical premotion: is he right in what he affirms?

We must therefore reject the first pretension of eclecticism; here is the second. Everything is already discovered; we must give up the hope of ever discovering anything new. All truths are already contained in the four systems; we must gather them there, and unite them in a common synthesis. This second formula is stranger still than the first, for we are led to ask: When did it begin to be true?

I see indeed that Plato, who was very fond of traditions, and who was much attached to past times, maintains that the Egyptians possessed from the remotest antiquity all the treasures of human wisdom. Aristotle, I own, takes

care to ascribe each one of his opinions to some philosopher anterior to himself. Indeed, none of the discoveries of our predecessors should be lost for us. But does it follow that we, in our turn, cannot make fresh discoveries? Out of the mass of philosophical doctrines, is there not one belonging exclusively to Plato and Aristotle? What does M. Cousin himself say on the subject? We should ever be studying human conscience, for that book is more instructive than all those which are accumulated in libraries. The eclectics, by their second formula, commit the blunder of ascribing to the whole what is true only of the part. It is certain that many truths are discovered, but it is false that there are no more truths to discover, and that we are reduced to live upon what we can borrow from others.

Persons infatuated by eclecticism not only are disinclined to think for themselves, but they join the schools of the masters the most opposed to each other, having made up their mind to adopt the spirit of docility and of conciliation, by virtue of which they accept a little from all sides and combine contrary views. This extreme aptness to conciliate has for result, in the first place, to annihilate the conciliator. By dint of belonging to every body, he ceases to be some one. He becomes a generaliser *à outrance*; he has no perception of differences. Now, without differences there are no ideas. It is useless for the eclectics to protest against being called Syncretists. They think the accusation is false, they will not consent to be Syncretists, but they are necessarily so.

An eclectic is not a philosopher, he is an echo repeating every sound. He is no longer a spirit, for he accepts every opinion ; nor a will, for he belongs to anyone who chooses to take him. I am quite aware that I am drawing the caricature of eclecticism. Cousin, in particular, and Leibnitz before him, had too much merit to abandon themselves thus. For them eclecticism was not philosophy, but an aid towards it. They had masters holding opposite views, and whose doctrines they excelled in reconciling ; but they were masters themselves ; they made discoveries, they possessed the creative genius. Like all great philosophers, they were poets. They avoided the inconveniences of their method, thanks to their individual superiority.

After all, Cousin's doctrine contains many truths and still more fancies. I would not mind applying to him, with one modification, his own formula, and saying that he is true in what he describes, and false in what he explains. He describes very well the senses, the will, the various faculties of the understanding ; he shows admirably that movement must rest upon what cannot be moved, the ephemeral on the eternal, the finite on the infinite. But he does not explain either how the *ego* knows the *non-ego*, how the body acts upon the spirit, how the infinite creates the finite, or how the finite knows the infinite, addresses itself to Him by prayer, obtains His intervention, and profits by His direction. Like all philosophers, he repeats that philosophy is the science of causes. It discovers causes and refers them to their

effects: it names them and classifies them, but never explains them. It is the nomenclature of causes, it is not the science of them. It knows the *how* of nothing.

In his beautiful and profound work on Victor Cousin, M. Janet asserts that he was constantly suffering from metaphysical fever. He had it without intermission from 1825 to 1830.—a long fit which suffices, I think, for his glory as a metaphysician. The fever ceased in 1830, when he played a part in the government of society. To the fever of discovering the secret of things, which is, properly speaking, the metaphysical one, succeeded forthin the fever of governing and regulating souls, which is the political fever in its noblest form. For Cousin I acknowledge with M. Janet, has always suffered from fever; but where I differ from my friend and old pupil is M. Janet allow me to remind him that I have had the honour of being his teacher, although I do not enjoy the still the greater honour of having been his master. Where I differ from M. Janet is, by affirming that if Cousin had fever in 1830, as he had had it in 1825, it was not the same kind.

He is not very far distinguished. He is firm as the as mountains are concerned, but he wavers in all opinions. He believes surely in the *infinity*, but he suspects that the consequences he has deduced from the immortality of reason are by no means irrefragable. He goes on reasoning, and even proving, that he is no atheist, feeling secretly all the while that he would prove his assertion much more strongly if he had himself less

upon the necessity of creation and the unity of substance. He is angry with M. de Broglie, who sees some danger in the diffusion of metaphysical problems; at the same time he acknowledges that this diffusion should not and cannot extend beyond the upper classes of society; it is to be wished that it may not shake the foundations of Christianity; religion is necessary for the happiness of some and the security of others. Cousin is not, as his enemies assert, a penitent philosopher, since he maintains as a principle the absolute independence of philosophy; but he is more than ever a circumspect philosopher: he had been the apostle of philosophy, now he has become its magistrate.

I prove this against M. Janet in two ways,—by what Cousin has not done, and by what he has done. When he was excluded from public teaching in 1820, he was only twenty-eight years old. He then held no function under government, and exercised no profession. For the space of seven years he was absolute master of his time. He occupied it most usefully, in beginning his translation of Plato, in editing Proclus and Descartes. All his friends, his former hearers, the pupils of the *École Normale*, thought that he would take advantage of his leisure to compose a great doctrinal work. When he was seen giving himself up to mere erudition, the disappointment was general. "Everyone is astonished and dissatisfied," says M. Jouffroy, in an article contributed to the *Globe*. "Whatever time M. Cousin does not devote to a book on philosophy seems to everyone time lost. I had at

first shared that opinion," he adds, "and I persist in thinking that such time is time lost for M. Cousin's glory; but when I reflect upon it, I do not think that the time is lost for philosophy, which is quite made; it is scattered through the various schools, etc., etc." Here you see eclecticism entering an appearance. But the theory of M. Jouffroy is refuted by M. Jouffroy's practice, who has constantly been observing, and only every now and then been writing history.

Eclecticism consoled this new Melancthon for the silence of the new Reformer. As I am no eclectic, I decline Jouffroy's explanation. One might only say that M. Cousin was not satisfied then with the solutions he had proposed at first, and that he went to Germany in quest of fresh ideas. It is none the less a first stroke of discouragement. But in 1830 the question for Cousin is no longer to find new teachers. He is thirty-eight years of age; he returns to Germany, not, this time, for the sake of philosophy, but for that of elementary and secondary education. He still is a titular lecturer; he can reoccupy his chair. He would renew there the successes of 1828 and 1829; he has, so to say, glory within his reach,—a popularity unequalled, and of which nothing can take the place. No; his teaching is over; he has made up his mind on that point. Has he then as a deputy-lecturer an eloquent pupil, an *alter ego*, a Jouffroy, for instance? No; Jouffroy is teaching on his own account; Cousin takes as his deputy M. Poret, who is neither famous, nor eloquent, nor yet profound, and who does

not even belong to his school. For twenty-one years he persists in having a deputy; in 1853, he retires altogether. It would be useless to say that for several years after 1830, he went on holding a conference at the *École Normale*. This conference took place once a week, on Sunday. It was intended for the philosophy students of the third year, who seldom numbered more than two or three. It was neither a course of philosophy, nor a course on the history of philosophy: it was a preparatory exercise for the *agrégation*. This motive determined him to give up the conference, because, in his quality of president of the jury, he could not at the same time prepare for the examination. In 1836, he did nothing but read with us the twelfth book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*; so he did in 1837, and that was the last year of his teaching at the *École Normale*. We often conversed about topics entirely foreign to that reading: Sometimes it was a question of philosophy which he suddenly started, or a point of literature; he even spoke to us about drawings and pictures, just as Michelet did in his conferences to the second-year pupils. It was hardly anything except chat; it seemed as if he was paying us a visit. Armand Carrel's death happened that year; it was I who announced to him that Carrel was lost, and that no hope was entertained for him at Saint-Mandé. He began to weep, whereat we felt both touched and surprised. The next Sunday he spoke to us of nothing but Carrel, with his exhaustless *verve*, and from thence went on to politics. He took up the same

subject during the following sittings, and by degrees this talk about politics went on from the government of France to that of the classes we should have under our care during the course of the next year. For those who were present at these lessons, or rather conversations, it is impossible to consider them as a sequel to M. Cousin's teaching. If it was necessary to give them a name, I should say that they were a series of remarks on the philosophy of Aristotle, which he knew badly, and on the position of professors of philosophy, which he knew better than anyone else. I can therefore say that he ceased teaching in 1830, at any rate he absolutely gave it up in 1837. If he had a pupil in 1836, it was myself; for he frequently detained me two or three hours on Sundays, either at his house when it rained, moving old books about, or in the Luxembourg gardens when we could go out. He spoke to me about everything, and, amongst other subjects, of philosophy; but he did not produce upon me the effect of a general looking out for fresh conquests; he was rather like a conqueror satisfied with what he possesses, and endeavouring to fortify himself strongly in his domains, and to organise them thoroughly. The part of the professor was finished for him, and so was that of the philosopher.

Indeed, the book which Jouffroy had vainly asked for in 1820, did not appear after 1830. Cousin never ceased writing; he did not write his work on philosophy, and that in itself, is an unanswerable proof. He multiplied new editions, and wrote prefaces. When

these prefaces are doctrinal, they bear one years he apologetic character. It is the director wh, he retires the professor. If he publishes a book that for several philosophy, it is his translation of Plato, conference at the on Abélard, or his memoir on Pascal, place once a week, ing close to literature, to the history philosophy students rather than to dogma. By degrees, he ed more than two old lectures, sometimes in their original philosophy, nor as a body of doctrine, like *le Vrai*, it was a preparatory. But if we look closely into these pu motive determine that their purpose is, not to develop cause, in his quality fresh views, but to tone down his old not at the same time from it all that is venturesome or dan in 1836, he did nothing preoccupation of the magistrate rat fifth book of Aristotle philosopher. The philosopher would 1837, and that was the to the suppressions and alteration *École Normale*. We imposed upon himself. I do not firely foreign to that revision is that of a converted m tion of philosophy which as that; nor do I say that he t. of literature; he even dogmas; but he certainly enter pictures, just as Miche explanations and theories. If he second-year pupils. catechism of his doctrines, as he it; it seemed as if one for the Catholic doctrine, he w Carrel's death happened strictly orthodox. That, everyone ced to him that Car ancient custom. Amongst the Plato entertained for him at the Pythagoreans, there was an es, whereat we felt both an exoteric one. Cousin's esoteri Sunday he spoke to manifest itself later than 1830. his exhaustless *verve*, ics. He took up

CHAPTER III.

M. COUSIN'S REGIMENT.

M. HACHETTE, the founder of the celebrated book-establishment, having become a publisher, after having been a teacher, took as his motto the following words : *Sic quoque docebo*. On ceasing to be a professor, and becoming the inspirer and the chief of all professors, M. Cousin, in like manner, could say that he merely extended and generalised his teaching. Let us carefully examine the moral and material position he then had, for nothing has been seen since which bears the slightest resemblance to it.

He passed in France for a very cloudy but very profound thinker, who had crushed the *idéologues* and the sensationalists, and founded for ages to come a great philosophical school. He was not so highly thought of in Germany, where they accused him a little of having *cribbed* from Schelling and Hegel ; they regarded him there, not without reason, as a disciple of those two great men ; they smiled at the improvements he had introduced into their systems ; but they looked upon him, withal, as a very apt mind, quickly and readily assimilating the substance of others, sufficiently familiar with antiquity-

and literature, very ingenious, very ardent, very eloquent, unquestionably the first amongst Frenchmen, and almost worthy of having studied at Bonn and at Göttingen. He had been condemned to silence in France by a reactionary cabinet, and in Germany he had been thrown into prison—as he was pleased to say, by a despotic government. Whenever they saw him appear in the large amphitheatre of the Sorbonne, the crowd which filled the yard burst out into enthusiastic cheers. He stretched out his hand to command silence, and in the midst of these excited youths, of these old men come back to listen to him, of these scholars, of these antagonists, he delivered his oracles in a vibrating tone of voice, almost always slowly, like a man who is in quest of his ideas; his language was powerful, figurative, solemn. People thought that they were witnessing the elaboration of his thought, whilst really they witnessed only its stage-effect. The sight was a thrilling one. When, all of a sudden, he opened out a vast horizon, or when he alighted upon one of those aphorisms which remain for ever engraved in one's remembrance, the enthusiasm was at its height. He was thin, he seemed suffering; his whole body was shaken by that famous metaphysical fever, more intense than the poetical one, and quite as fruitful of great results. His eyes literally sent forth flames. He seldom smiled, seldom spoke with impetuosity, and yet one felt that he could shine in every style of oratory. That great speaker, that great thinker was the enemy of the enemy,—I mean of the counter-revolution; he had

made the ministers of the Restoration tremble; he was the prophet of the liberal party; the master and expounder of the future. He literally was the idol of young scholars; moreover—and of this fact those young men were not aware—he was at the same time the idol of *salons*, where he carried his deep thoughts, seasoned with much gracefulness; a splendid writer, besides, and this does not always accompany oratorical genius, worthy of understanding Plato, and at that time the only man worthy of translating him.

After the Revolution of July he gave up his lectureship. Everyone numbered him amongst the victors, although he had taken no part in the fight. He had blamed the *ordinances*; he was certainly the adversary of M. de Polignac, but he was not that of Charles X; and he thought that without a revolution the country might have returned to a wise interpretation of the *Charter*. This he proclaimed very loudly, at first. It did not cost him a great effort to accept the new government. He was not one of the victors, but he was their friend, and favours were showered down upon him, to the great applause of the multitude. The multitude is the embodiment of caprice. Sometimes they insist that their leaders shall be so many Brutuses devoted to all, and pitiless for themselves. Sometimes they delight in petting them, heightening them, making glory attractive by all the gew-gaws of vanity. That is what they did for Cousin. It pleased them to think that at the age of forty he was member of two academies, councillor of state, peer of

France, titular lecturer at the Sorbonne, supreme chief at the *École Normale*, and member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction. That small professor, born in a garret, and who had suffered from persecution, had become without transition a *grand seigneur*. This new incarnation of his pleased the people ; he was one of the forms of their victory.

It took him only three years to go over all that distance. He was titular lecturer, member of the French Academy, and Councillor of State *en service extraordinaire* in 1830 ; member of the Royal Council, and of the Academy of Ethical and Political Science in 1832 ; director of the *École Normale* in the same year, peer of France during the next ; it remained for him only to be a cabinet minister in order to have exhausted the list of human dignities : he was so in 1840. We have no idea at present of the power and the prestige which all these dignities conferred. The 1830 Revolution had weakened them considerably ; but those of 1848 and of 1870 have destroyed them. A peer of France of Louis Philippe's creation was only a non-entity compared with one of the reign of Charles X ; but our senators and councillors of state of to-day cannot stand comparison with those of Louis Philippe. The university had its episcopal bench in the upper house : M. Villemain, M. Cousin, Baron Thénard, Georges Cuvier, —that alone seemed a revolution. M. Cousin could hold his own against a marshal in the parliament, and the marshal had to mind what he was about. But the old Council of Public Instruction was especially the element most in opposition to our present manners and customs.

We have now a council consisting of forty-eight members; there sit five or six schoolmasters, not including one schoolmistress, elected for three years by their fellows, teachers in communal colleges, inspectors of various categories,—all that, as the legislature maintains, with the view of obeying the principle of competence, because no one is more qualified than the mistress of an infant-school to settle the teaching of an astronomy lectureship at the Collège de France. The members of that council meet at Paris, twice a year, for the space of eight days. They judge all matters of discipline, grant exemptions, and discuss all rules off hand. Those rules are sent to their lodgings on the Monday, they vote upon them on the Tuesday, and they can read them on the Wednesday in the *Journal Officiel*. A wonderful institution this, which invests all the authority in the hands of three directors, and all the responsibility in those of forty-eight councillors, whose very names are unknown, and who are unknown to one another. When M. Cousin entered the council royal, the members were eight in number, each one representing a special branch of teaching, where he was absolute chief. There might be found literary men such as M. Villemain, chemists such as M. Thénard, mathematicians such as M. Poisson. Men like those were not only the chiefs in their respective specialities, they were their illustration and pattern. The Minister of Public Instruction then was M. Guizot, and M. Guizot was the strongest intellect, and without

doubt the greatest orator in the cabinet. M. Thiers took up his position only later on. Absorbed by general politics, M. Guizot interfered with the government of the university only at very rare intervals, just to suggest an idea or to give a direction; he busied himself neither with the *personnel* nor with details: for that task he had eight councillors, eight ministers. The teaching of philosophy was unreservedly in the hands of M. Cousin. He drew up the decree, read it to his colleagues as a matter of form, and the minister signed it, also as a matter of form, in his study, where one of his secretaries had taken it. A fine thing it would have been to see M. Cousin discussing M. Thénard's instructions on chemistry, or M. Thénard having his say on psychology!

M. Cousin used to say that the professors of philosophy formed his regiment; but then it was a regiment the colonel of which was a marshal of France. He held his people by all sides. In the first place he was the chief of the *École Normale*. That was a superiority he enjoyed over his colleagues of the council. There, under his orders, he had a director, M. Guigniaut, the best of men, who had but one defect, viz., that of being too learned for a Frenchman. The truth is that the real director was M. Cousin; everything came under his supervision—finances, rules, discipline, teaching. He appointed the professors, made or revised the programmes both for literature and philosophy, and entered into the minutest details. He lived at the Sorbonne, where he occupied a fine set of rooms absolutely full of his books.

walk in on his way to pay an extempore visit to M. Guigniaut. He seemed unusually tall, on account of his extreme leanness; in winter he wore the most extraordinary costume that can be imagined,—a long overcoat of coarse blue cloth, topped by three capes lined with red plush, a grey hat, and a walking-stick. His eyes cast forth flames under that grey hat, and, as he passed on, he darted looks at us, as an ogre seeking whom he shall devour next. We know he was not bad, but he was whimsical, and liked to be considered inexorable. Fatal ideas passed through his head,—as, for instance, to cut off our Thursday's outing. He frightened M. Guigniaut just as he did us, although they had spent a whole year together on the forms of the *École Normale*. It was M. Guigniaut who communicated to us M. Cousin's good pleasure: of this we held him responsible, and his popularity, which should have been great, suffered a little in consequence. So long as Cousin was there, the school felt oppressed, as if in the expectation of some unknown misfortune—a sentiment, I suppose, which naturally results from the nearness of a sovereign master. As he went out, the master would come near one of us; we were in the habit of walking quickly, but he ran all the more, making frantic gesticulations with his stick, and shouting at the top of his voice. He did not take the trouble of watching over himself, when he was in our company; he served up to us all the ideas which occurred to him, all the words which came uppermost, with incredible *verve*, losing sometimes a little of his dignity, but never one

jot of his authority. We admired, but we trembled. Sometimes we longed to laugh,—I blush for it still; but either we did not understand him, or he made fun of us, by taking advantage of his superiority. We must say, likewise, as an apology for us, that he often was rather eccentric. When he met a paradox on his way, he pushed it on almost to extravagance, especially when he saw our confusion. We believed him to be a great genius, but rather cracked. Never was there a more sensible man, but he had a language and ways the secret of which had to be learnt by degrees. One of his great delights consisted in talking to us about our future, promising us, with much condescension, posts so much below our hopes, that the mere idea of them made us shudder. “As for you, Simon,” he used to say to me, “I cannot promise you Pontivy, although it is in the centre of your native country; I shall try, I am seeking combinations. Perhaps I may be able to succeed, if you should be first amongst the *agrégés*.” Now Pontivy was the lowest of the *collèges royaux*—no pupils, no resources; a small town, almost a village, lost in the midst of Lower Brittany. People went there as to do penance. He said to Saisset, the ablest of us all: “With industry and perseverance, you may arrive at everything, even an Academy-inspectorship!” You should have seen with what an air of respect for that *important post* he delivered his opinion. Some years later, I happened to be at his Sorbonne lodgings, where I was giving him some memoranda for a speech he

contemplated making on manufacture-marks. The servant brought him the card of a professor of the fifth or sixth class at the college of Nantes. "What a bore!" he said. "I am obliged to receive him: he is a comrade of the *Éclaircissement*." He received him standing, so as to cut the ceremony short. The other was quite moved. "How happy I am to see you!" Cousin looked honestly as if he meant to answer, "Well, now that you have seen me" "I have my children there, who are most anxious to" That was too much for so unsentimental a peer of France; he opened his bedroom door, and disappeared, saying: "There, introduce Simon to them: he is my substitute."

He used to come very punctually on Sundays, to give what he called his lesson. At the stroke of eight we saw appearing at the end of the alley, the walking-stick, the grey hat, and the blue frock-coat. We had assembled beforehand in the library—two small rooms on the first floor (*entresol*), where the books, about twenty thousand volumes, were heaped together on shelves of fir-wood, roughly hewn. It was the library of Georges Cuvier, which he had bought during the previous year for the use of the school. There was a long table and forms for the readers, a fir-wood table and a straw-bottomed arm-chair for the librarian, who was, if I am not mistaken, our comrade M. Barroux. Cousin took his seat in Barroux's arm-chair, placing the grey hat, the walking-stick, and the blue overcoat on the table, which was in consequence completely encumbered. There I also

placed my translation of the twelfth book of the *Metaphysics*. We sat at the end of a form, opposite him. There were four of us—Saisset, Lorquet, Boutron, and myself. Saisset was the future translator of Spinoza, author of so many fine papers in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and of several excellent works. He died quite young, being at the time titular professor at the Sorbonne, and member of the Academy of Ethical and Political Science. Lorquet died a few years ago, secretary of the Paris *Faculté des Lettres*. Boutron, too, is gone; he was a distinguished economist. All the pupils, except myself, are dead, as well as the master. I used to read out my translation of the twelfth book, each one making his remarks with entire freedom. Cousin, naturally, assumed the lion's share in the debates, but he discussed just as one of us, taking due account of everyone's opinions. We ought to have worshipped him; but there was a *je ne sais quoi* which prevented friendship—fear, I believe;—as for our admiration, it was boundless. Sometimes, almost always, he would dwell upon an idea introduced by chance; this led to a series of varied remarks, original, wonderful; comparisons, parallels, descriptions, anecdotes. Never, I venture to affirm, has there been seen, never shall be seen in the conversation of a man, such an abundance of beautiful things. The lesson, begun at eight o'clock, was fixed to last one hour and a half; we were still in our places at one o'clock. Then, taking his hat suddenly, he said to me: "Come to the Luxembourg." By-the-bye, I had to go without my dinner.

Once at the Luxembourg, he recommenced his lesson for my own private benefit. I think he forgot often to whom he was speaking, and that he spoke to himself. He really was indefatigable; as master of himself, and with a voice as strong at the end of three or four hours. At the fall of the day, he left me there, and went off to dress for a dinner-party at one of his high and mighty friends; in the meanwhile I wandered about the streets till it was time to return and sup at the *École*, where I arrived at eight o'clock, dying with hunger, and having eaten nothing during the whole day but a piece of dry bread at seven in the morning.

What did he talk to us about in his Sunday lesson? Of everything, but seldom of philosophy. He readily spoke about his contemporaries, and that was a great treat:—of his German friends, Hegel, the one he preferred; Schleiermacher, Kant, whom he had not known. He talked less of their philosophy than of their persons and their habits. He talked also of his fellow-academicians, Royer-Collard and Guizot, for whom he entertained the greatest respect and admiration; Thiers, his master in politics, as he said, an historian equal in merit to Livy; Villemain, whom he most cordially detested. He likewise discoursed about the Romanticists, making a certain amount of fun of them; Victor Hugo, whose genius he loudly acknowledged, and whose candidature for a seat in the Academy he supported at that very time,—a difficult candidature. Dupaty was preferred to Victor Hugo, and Thiers used to say to Cousin: “I

shall give him my vote as soon as you show me in his works four lines which are only middling."

Armand Carrel died that year. I knew him; I was a very ardent politician of twenty years old. I looked upon myself as struck down in the person of my chief. M. Guigniaut was obliged to give me leave, *volens volens*, to go to Saint-Mandé in quest of news. I did not quite know what M. Cousin would say to me the next day. He walked straight to me on entering. "Well," said he, "you went to Saint-Mandé last evening. How are matters going on?" "He is lost," said I to him. I was quite crushed. Cousin turned aside and wept. We were stupefied, but very much affected. These tears changed him, and heightened him in our eyes. Really, he was the man of all contrasts. He used to say, "Man is a complex being; a nation is complex." His political theory partly rested upon the necessary complexity of nations.

He spoke to us much about politics,—those of our profession, I mean; that is to say, of the conduct we should have to lead with *Monsieur le Préfet* and *Monsieur l'Évêque*. It was nearly his sole topic of conversation during the last six months' term. "You shall go and call at your bishop's. No; I am making a mistake. Call first on Monsieur le Préfet: he is your superior hierarchically. 'Monsieur le Préfet, I come to declare to you. . . .' You may even say to the Préfet: 'M. Cousin has commissioned me to declare to you that the government can rely on all occasions. . . .'" You

think perhaps that we then made faces, I especially, in my quality as a great party-chief; but we were too delighted at what we heard, and too certain that the visit in question would never be paid; so we thought of nothing but of the comedy thus enacted before us by that high and illustrious person. And the call at the bishop's! "Monsieur l'Évêque"—here he corrected himself with pompous gesticulation—"My lord, whilst acknowledging the independence of reason . . .' But no; it will be better not to say so. Speak to him merely of your respect for the Church. 'I am aware, my lord, that philosophy will never have any influence except on the cultivated classes, and that religion is necessary for the people. It is even necessary to philosophy, whose way it opens and whose action it completes.'" Then came very lofty considerations on the two immortal Sisters, for we have had the original taste of them, and it is from M. Cousin that M. Thiers borrowed them. We were too full of philosophical arrogance to enjoy the really strong part of the discourse he put into our mouths, and we only thought of the bishop's stupefaction if we took the liberty of delivering to him *à domicile* a lecture on divinity, to say nothing of the astonishment of M. Cousin himself if the bishop wrote to him, saying that a trumpery little professor of philosophy, just out of the *École Normale*, had ventured to treat him to an impertinent scene in his own palace.

He gave us useful directions on the use of our time, on private studies, and the manner of conducting a class.

qualities, their capacities. Once placed in colleges out of Paris, he never lost sight of them. He corresponded with all those who were promising, pointing to them subjects for study, *theses* for the Doctor's degree. He sent them lists of books. If he saw or guessed that you were following a wrong track, he quickly corrected you. He perhaps did not feel much affection for the soldiers of his regiment—for, at heart, he was not tender—but he was passionately fond of talent and of philosophy. No one was more effective than he for awakening, maintaining, developing the love of work. Jouffroy did not possess nearly to the same extent the virtue of propagandism. His action was exercised only through a small circle of friends and disciples, which he did not care to enlarge. He was the man of intimacy, just as Cousin was the man for the crowd. If you called upon Jouffroy, you found him kind, tender, helpful; Cousin was neither kind nor tender; but he called upon you, shook you about, urged you to work. In one word, he was a master—and what a master! I think now that we were not as grateful as we ought to have been. The small sides of his character concealed from us the great ones.

On leaving the *École Normale* the absolute rule was that you should present yourself as a candidate for *agrégation*. There the professors of philosophy *in posse* found again M. Cousin, who for the space of twenty-five years was chairman of the jury. Not only did he make his former pupils of the *École Normale* undergo a new and final

hour; and the subject, like that of the two discussions, was given by the president, and drawn for by the candidates. The competition, as may be seen, lasted five days, besides the days spent in preparation. When the candidates were numerous, each trial lasted several days, and the *agrégation* extended over several weeks. I do not believe that there is any exercise more toilsome for the candidate; it is very fatiguing likewise for the judges. Not one of the eight members of the royal council failed in his duty of presiding every year over the *agrégation* of his special branch of studies; and it was not here the case of a sitting where one can rise, seek recreation, forget for a moment what is going on: you must from beginning to end be attentive to everything, take note of everything, remember everything. I have seen sittings begin at eight o'clock in the morning and last till six o'clock in the evening, with an hour's interval for lunch; and that went on for several weeks. Often have I sat on the jury of philosophy with M. Cousin. He was really astonishing there. Not only was he attentive to everything, he remembered everything. At the end of a week, of a fortnight, the ideas, the shades of thought, the tone, the gestures, the style, the hesitations—all was present to him. The day's work of the jurymen did not end with that of the candidates; they remained sitting, in order to compare notes, to discuss. After each series of trials, there was a fresh discussion, frequently a very long one. Often a whole day was spent in that way by the jurymen. The correction of

struggles, and he liked to see others struggle. When I began, in 1839, to be his deputy at the Sorbonne, he fixed my honorarium at a thousand francs (£40) a year, that is, eighty-three francs a month. He knew for a certainty that I had not another penny in the world. And he was delighted at it. "He will manage!" said he. I was living then in a sixth-floor attic, Place de la Sorbonne. He said to my comrades who were crossing the square with him, asking for promotion: "Look at Simon there; he is in his garret without any fire, never knowing to-day whether he shall have anything for dinner to-morrow."

He knew the names and antecedents of all his soldiers. As for the pupils of the *École Normale*, he had had them three years under his immediate and most thorough *surveillance*. He had examined most of the others for the Master's degree (*licence*). He had studied them at the *agrégation*, and some of them—the wretches!—several years in succession. As for the regents of communal colleges (they were called *régents* then, which was very ridiculous; now they are styled *professors*), he had to trust to the notes of rectors and inspectors. If one of them published a notice, an edition, an article somewhat serious, much more a book, Cousin immediately read it, or, as he used to say, *subsmelt* it (*le subodorait*). If it was worthless, the man was ruined. If, on the contrary, it showed some sign of talent, Cousin became at once his tyrant and his protector. He never rested till he had got out of him all that he could give, nor till, on the

"Here lies So-and-so, who was a dog, according to Plato's definition, fawning upon his master, and snapping at the calves of the enemies of the household." I remember the adventure which happened to one of my friends, a very remarkable man, who was titular lecturer in a provincial *faculté*. Cousin was at the time a cabinet minister. I attended one of his evening receptions; the rooms were crowded with high personages, members of the Institute, peers of France, members of the House of Deputies, and even professors, as it happened to be the Easter vacation. *My* man arrives, dusty, in a frock-coat—it seems as if I could still perceive him—a frock-coat which reached as low as his heels, carrying under his arm a big book on which he founded his hopes of success and of glory. He walks straight up to Cousin, pushing aside everybody, and not even thinking that he was interrupting a conversation. "*Monsieur le Ministre*," says he in his loudest voice, "here is *my book*! You have the first copy. I solicit the lectureship of ———, which is just now vacant." Everyone had remained silent to listen to that pattern college-pedant. "Sir," said Cousin to him, speaking in a still louder voice, "you must give your book to one of the servants in the hall. As for you, I advise you to think a little more of your intellectual and moral progress, and much less of your material one." These outbursts were not frequent, because the regiment was well drilled; but no one felt safe, and everyone was on the alert.

One of his great concerns was the candidateship to the Academy. He exercised great influence both at the

on the table when M. Ancelot walked in. "You have not surely written all that?" said M. Cousin to him. "You have added Madame Ancelot's works?" "I acknowledge that I thought . . ." "You could not do anything better," said M. Cousin. "I shall not vote for the couple," continued he, addressing me, as soon as M. Ancelot had left the room. "The wife is a *précieuse ridicule*, and the husband is a fool." It was not thus that he treated Jouffroy, who did not give him the opportunity; it is to me that he confidently expressed his views on the subject. "I am extremely puzzled about the French Academy: I have no one to propose." "Take Jouffroy." "Ah! poor Jouffroy!" (here all his great gesticulations). "If he heard you, he would blush to the back of his ears."

I might mention many other incidents. Here is mine. I was a candidate for the Academy of Ethical and Political Science, and my candidateship was progressing fairly, when my late master, M. Garnier, took it into his head to be my competitor. I would never have presented myself against him, but I had not the virtue of withdrawing my claims in his presence. This was for me a most painful situation; it lasted two months, during which I never called upon M. Cousin without having to listen to the praise of my competitor. He discovered every day in him fresh merits, just to annoy me; and when he had thoroughly tortured me with the praises of M. Garnier, he would begin to discuss my poor works. It was no use my telling him that, in my own opinion,

presence of a promising man, and face to face with a problem of psychology or of ethics which pleased him, he argued and spoke for a long time, with that precision, that clearness, that firm and calm authority equalled by nobody. He was sometimes merciless. I have heard him say to a candidate who had obliged him to state a demonstration a second time—"Either you understand this, or you don't; if you don't, I pity you." The poor fellow was so completely taken aback, that, after some efforts to answer the next examiner, he could not recover himself, and withdrew. Jouffroy did not hesitate to decline a discussion when he was not familiar with the subject. On the occasion of my examination, he said to me: "I have come, first to cheer you, and then to give you my vote; but I am not qualified to speak on the School of Alexandria."

Cousin was convinced of his qualifications to speak on any subject whatever, and I really believe that he was right. There was not one topic in the world on which he could not extemporise a sparkling *causerie*. He knew, besides, a number of things on a number of varied subjects, because his mind was always on the watch, and he never lost anything of what he had once been acquainted with. If he was there, everyone knew that he would go on speaking so long, that he never allowed room for others to say their say. He did not much mind that, because he was not over-polite. And besides, as he came there for himself, and for himself exclusively, it was also for himself alone that the audience had gathered

together. He was a good logician, but dreadful, especially as he had neither consideration nor scruples. The candidate, who had often spent one or two years in mastering his subject, felt strong, even in the presence of Jouffroy, by the whole strength of his preparation; but as soon as Cousin began to speak, you knew you were at his discretion. He was bent either upon *bringing you out* or getting you *flucked*; you saw that at once, and you knew that it would be just as he had decided. He did not give a lecture, like Jouffroy; he carried on a conversation, but after his own fashion, that is to say, in a series of soliloquies.

I have already said that he was unrivalled for conversational powers. Happy words, new ideas, comparisons, anecdotes, came to his lips in crowds, and he scattered them about with a freedom, a *maestria* perfectly unequalled. He went from jokes to touching scenes, and from the greatest subjects to the most trifling ones, with an ease which placed all things on a level. It was impossible to get weary, because the points of view were always changing; it was impossible to get impatient, because you always profited by listening to him. You were nullified during the operation, but strengthened after it was over. It was magic. Further, not only was his mind wonderful, but the accessory of his mind—his voice, which could answer every variety of intonation; his eyes, either smiling or terrible; his eloquent lips; his gesticulation, which was slightly overdone without offending good taste; for he was of the school of Plato, and never overstepped the proper limits, even in his

boldest flights of fancy. He possessed a quality which I have never seen in any other *causeur*: they require a public of a certain peculiar kind;—Sainte-Beuve was witty only in the society of wits or of pretty women; I hardly dare say that Saint-Marc Girardin was himself only when he was surrounded by college pedants; Villemain required a lecture-hall or a *salon*. Cousin was ready everywhere, with everyone, on every conceivable subject. Never mind who was the interlocutor—whether there was a room full or one person, and whether that person was a clever man or a fool—Cousin went on still, if he happened to be in the mood to discover new topics and to talk. Apparently, amongst the other creations which he accumulated upon each other in those circumstances, he also created for himself an audience which understood and applauded him. The audience, the real one, the one who was there, sitting by his side on a chair, and who wondered that Cousin condescended to take so much trouble for him, would have been very much surprised to learn all at once that Cousin did not in the least think of him, or else that he looked upon him as an arrant fool.

I think that the eight months of his career as a cabinet minister were not the happiest of his life. He was glad of the opportunity of applying certain ideas which he had long matured, and of making certain good creations, to which I shall presently allude; glad, also, to be the master, to make a show—for that was one of his weaknesses; to have the precedence at court and in the *salons*; no longer to be one peg below Villemain;—the

great and the small, like the good and the bad, were strangely mixed in him. He had long wished for that post; he loved even its pretty accessories. He was walking one evening with me in the Avenue Gabriel, during the end of February 1840; and, pointing out to me the beautiful garden which lined one side of the avenue, he said to me: "To-morrow, perhaps, I shall have gardens like these." "What?" said I, "have you made your fortune?" "Better than that! I am about to be a cabinet minister. We have an appointment this evening at M. Thiers'. He urges me, he insists. I can't refuse. One must go on with one's friends!" Then he spoke to me about his *Plato*—"which was not finished." But I said to myself that if the *Plato* was the only difficulty, the cabinet would soon be complete. He started the next morning, on foot, for the Rue de Grenelle, where Louis, his servant, had sent on by a porter a trunk containing a few things. He had no further trouble about his installation.

We may relate his weaknesses without diminishing his merits in the least; for nothing would have induced him to stay a minute, if his honour had urged him to go. He showed it clearly. It is he who, at the beginning of the Egyptian business, said to the king: "Dismiss us!" I think that, whilst enjoying his grandeur, he felt ill at ease and embarrassed by it. He would begin a familiar chat with some old acquaintance, and stop short all of a sudden, for fear of failing in respect towards himself. When he held a pen for the purpose of signing state-

papers, he felt, as it were, an itching to write a page on Jacqueline Pascal. He ascended once his old Sorbonne chair, but it was only to preside over the distribution of prizes on the occasion of the general competition, and to read aloud a written address. What a sad contrast with the past !

He displayed great activity during his tenure of office, and yet he did not make great revolutions. He had been so closely connected with the administration of his predecessors, that there was no need for him to repair the premises ; he was like an old tenant, who becomes landlord of the estate. He found everything in the place where he had deposited it himself.

You must not think that the minister discovered traces of the councillor only in matters pertaining to philosophy,—that would be having a most imperfect knowledge of Cousin, whose habit it was to meddle with everything. He would not have allowed anyone to meddle with his regiment, but he liked to interfere in the regiments of other officers. I should not be astonished at hearing that he quarrelled with M. Thénard on questions of chemistry. Besides, he possessed a very extensive knowledge of subjects which did not belong to his speciality.

He was, the day before, administrator of philosophy ; but he was very far from being a stranger to primary education, which, since M. Guizot, had become one of the most important branches of the Ministry of Public Instruction. He had taken part in preparing the law of

1833 ; he even ascribed to himself the paternity of it ; but this, we must maintain, belonged to M. Guizot. Cousin wrote out the law only in agreement with M. Guizot's inspiration, and under his orders. It is true, nevertheless, that he wrote it, and that the statement of motives is in his hand. He had been for a long time quite competent on these topics, having been entrusted, both in Germany and Holland, with missions which produced reports full of facts and ideas. There was, accordingly, nothing left for him to alter in the law of 1833. One of his pre-occupations was to develop the superior primary schools. If he had had time, he would have given to them a very great importance, for he rightly thought that, as primary schools train workmen, and colleges scholars and literates, so the intermediate and superior primary schools should be nurseries for managers (*contremaitres*), accountants, and small directors. It is nearly the same thought which, later on, suggested the creation of special secondary teaching. There is this difference, however, that in 1840 industry had not made the progress to which it has reached at the present day ; the directors of industrial establishments had less pretensions and fewer intellectual needs : the superior primary schools were enough.

According to Cousin's views, there were three drawbacks to the substituting of inferior colleges instead of these schools. First of all, you did not give to the smaller *bourgeoisie* the teaching it requires ; next, you gave to incapables a teaching they cannot understand, and which

inspires them with conceit, without providing them with any resource ; thirdly, you bring down in colleges the level of literary teaching, which might be raised if it was exclusively limited to the *élite* of pupils. Give to the masses only the strictly necessary education, but give it liberally, to the whole population ; to the intermediate classes give a positive, practical instruction, teach them only what is useful ; on the contrary, carry as far as possible the intellectual culture reserved for the higher classes and for pupils of superior mental gifts :—such was the *ensemble* he contemplated, and with which are connected the orders, decrees, circulars, and programmes issued by him.

Superior teaching, the faculties, the *Collège de France*, the great educational establishments, excited his activity in an exceptional manner. He hastened to organise a body of *Agrégés de Facultés*, designed to be the auxiliaries of the titular lecturers, and to provide them with substitutes. They corresponded to the German *privat-docenten*. From this institution have come forth the *maîtres de conférences* of the present day, with this difference, that they are now appointed immediately, whereas Cousin made them arrive by competition, thus assimilating the rules of the boards of literature and of science with those of the boards of law and of medicine.

One of his great projects was to found *university* towns, after the pattern of Germany, where Jena, Göttingen, Heidelberg, and so many other cities vie with each other in point of science and of glory. Thus, in France, he

aimed at multiplying the centres of intellectual activity, and at creating an *ensemble* of boards of lectures in the capitals of our ancient provinces. A board of literature, isolated, does not even command an audience; place side by side with it a law school and a medical one, the whole flourishes. The plan is excellent in itself; but whilst forming it, he forgot that if Rennes or Lyons possess, as much as Jena or Göttingen, the qualities necessary to being great intellectual centres, our great towns have to put up with the overwhelming preponderance of Paris. Germany, then, was split up into a multitude of small states, and even Berlin, compared to Paris, was only an insignificant town.

To Cousin belong the initiatives of the transformations which superior instruction received. Time failed him, not ideas. He was full of plans when he left, and yet he had never ceased working and producing. Other cabinet ministers, whose tenure of office lasted longer, have done more; not one has done as much within such narrow limits. He ardently sought publicity for all his acts. Damiron used to say to him: "You make too much noise." Cousin looked fixedly at Damiron, without vouchsafing an answer, and went on with his *din*. He made a further stir about his ministry after his downfall, since he undertook to write an account of the great things he had accomplished.

He had been obliged, after long hesitations, to appoint a successor in his regiment; that is to say, to name in the royal council a councillor entrusted with

the care of superintending the teaching of philosophy. He had taken Jouffroy ; it was absolutely necessary to do so ; he had not thought for one moment of taking anyone else. Jouffroy was not a lieutenant ; he was a *bonâ fide* colonel, so that Cousin, on being promoted, had lost the power which he valued most. In what condition would he find his regiment when he left the ministry ? and the *École Normale* ? and his library, the other portion of his heart ? I am sure that, when he drove down the Rue du Bac in his carriage to go and dine at the king's, he regretted the evening walks we used to take together through these very streets, and in the Rue Saint-Jacques ; for we went round the small island, to use a well-known phrase ; each of us, the peer of France and the insignificant professor, having in his pocket a pennyworth of broiled chestnuts, munching them under the nose of the passers-by, who little suspected that they were elbowing one of the greatest writers of the country.

He fell at last. The dream had only been of eight months' duration. The catastrophe was a hard one, especially in the beginning, for everything failed him at once, his empire and his regiment. He declared that he was "hard up" for living. He had naturally taken back from me the salary of titular professor, which I had enjoyed for a whole quarter ; but the post of councillor, which Jouffroy did not offer to return to him, was worth twelve thousand francs. These twelve thousand francs having disappeared, left him in difficulties. He confided all this to me every evening, and I was, rather oddly, selected

as the sharer of all these complaints. His lamentations were so numerous and so loud that they reached the ears of the king, who was fond of him, and who did not like to see any of his late ministers in reduced circumstances. He spoke of it to M. de Rothschild, who immediately offered Cousin a seat at a railway council-board. But this is what the adversaries of Cousin should meditate, who everlastingly cry out against his avarice: he unhesitatingly refused. "That is not," said he, "a post fit for an academician." Nothing could compensate, in his eyes, for that seat of councillor, which he was fond of on account of the salary, but still more on account of the authority connected with it. If he spoke to me in a melancholy tone of his library, to which he would no longer be able, as before his tenure of office, to devote six thousand francs a year, he enlarged much more on the changes introduced in the regiment. Let us be fair; the twelve thousand francs were nothing to him compared with these changes, which broke his heart. "He was an honest man; he is my friend. A fine mind, if you please, even a philosopher; a continuator of Dugald Stewart, a little narrower than his master. But that last circular! . . ." To make matters worse, the regiment yielded, and turned its back upon the Eleatic School and the School of Alexandria. It was wholly given up to psychology. "What would Schleiermacher say!"

Jouffroy died at the beginning of 1842. Cousin was able to resume his place at the royal council. When he returned there, it seemed that he had occupied his seat

as recently as the day before, so present to his mind were both things and persons. He felt convinced that his return would be hailed with joy even at the other end of Germany. In France—I mean in the French colleges—opinions were divided. Jouffroy had as many friends as Cousin, and much fewer enemies ; or, rather, he had none. There ought to have been, to tell the truth, no hesitation between the master and the pupil. Jouffroy had neither the indefatigable activity, nor the quickness of mind, nor the wide views, nor the varied knowledge, nor yet the unbounded devotedness to his task and to his mission which made of Cousin a matchless director. I used to think sometimes that he ought to have been born in the fifteenth century, and to have held the office of abbot-general of Citeaux or of Cluny. He would perhaps have agitated the Church, and yet I do not think so ; but he would unquestionably have shed lustre upon it by his works and by the works of his pupils. Certainly the university, and the philosophy of the university, could wish for neither an abler champion nor a master more efficient and more devoted. I do not say a gentler one.

Many complaints were made about him, as is always the case with all powerful men. He was hard for others, because he was hard for himself. His severities were often a token of esteem. If he had not set some value upon me, he would not have exposed me to die of starvation. That is what I often say to myself, reproaching myself for not having had all the gratitude for him which

I should have felt. In vain do I remember all the acts of his administration ; I do not find one which does not bear witness to his love of justice, and his devotedness to young men of promise. It sometimes happened that he turned round upon his own creatures, when their talent was formed and had become brilliant. I am perfectly sure that, before being frightened by Jouffroy, he loved him tenderly, and that he loved him still, whilst he was jealous of him. He loved him after his own fashion, which was neither very sentimental nor very deep. He looked upon it as a serious matter to make an appointment in some obscure college where there were several candidates whose merits were pretty equal. If the question was about an important post—a professorship in a royal college, or a lectureship at Paris,—that became his all-engrossing thought ; it made him suffer, it tormented him. He had always the best reasons for deciding. The selection once made, he was extremely sorry for the victim, provided the victim did not show himself. For if the unhappy wretch came into his presence, he treated him roughly, and terrified him. One might have said that he had been condemned by some evil genius to make himself misunderstood.

And yet he ought to have been amiable, for he was thoroughly self-satisfied. People say that great men are never contented with what they have done. If that is true, it is only so far as *small-great men*, second-class great men, are concerned. I have often seen real great men self-satisfied. It is, I believe, to this failing that

Michelet alludes, when he says that great men are joyous. Cousin possessed the joy of knowing his own worth. He felt that he was a necessary man. A year or two before 1848, I happened to meet Pierre Leroux, who began to launch forth against the eclectics. "Besides," said he to me, "all this will fall with Cousin. When Cousin disappears, your old set of professors, your whole school will disappear with him." I was thoroughly excited after this remark, for I did not believe that we were so insignificant. I related the conversation to Cousin, who was breakfasting on bread and honey. "He is quite right," said he, finishing his slice. Pray believe that he was not always so discouraging.

He admired three things belonging to his time:—the *Charter*, to which succeeded, in his thought, the July monarchy; the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, which he believed he had perfected; and the royal council, of which his own branch was the best directed and the most satisfactorily disciplined. You must understand that I am now alluding to the old royal council, the true one, the great one, such as it was under Guizot, Villemain, Cousin,—in one word, the *Council of Eight*. Under the pretence of enlarging it, M. de Salvandy dishonoured it by introducing into it nullities. Such, at any rate, was the opinion of Cousin, whom the pretended reform had exasperated. It seemed to him as though M. de Salvandy had put his hand on the ark of the Covenant. When Duruy was named Minister of Public Instruction, the thought struck him of calling upon the two or three great

university men in Paris. He did not fail to go to Cousin's, at the Sorbonne. At the end of a long conversation, he said to him: "What more important thing would you do if you were in my place?" Cousin rested his chin upon his hand, and reflected profoundly for a few minutes. Then, stepping suddenly out of dream-land, he answered solemnly: "I should reinstate the *Council of Eight*."

The results obtained by M. Cousin during a reign of upwards of twenty years were considerable. In the first place he trained a body of professors, very distinguished, very learned, very prudent, who opened the young minds without disturbing them, and whose teaching, coming in at the end of the whole circle of literary studies, shed light upon it and completed it. In order to appreciate the service thus rendered to philosophy, one ought to know what philosophical teaching was from 1810, date of its introduction into the university, till 1831, when M. Cousin assumed his functions. M. Royer-Collard had reduced it somewhat into order; logic was taught, in Latin, from an anonymous work called *la Philosophie de Lyon*; there were a few declamations on God and the destiny of the soul; a few pages of Descartes, Fénelon, or La Romiguère were read; with the exception of that logic, which was barbarous, all the rest was nothing else but somewhat exaggerated rhetoric. The French language appeared only as an humble satellite behind the ruling idiom—Latin. M. Cousin it was who introduced *agrégés* everywhere; he it was who restored the French

language to its proper place, imposed a uniform programme, and caused it to be accepted in the most insignificant colleges. M. Janet remarks, that whilst that programme prescribes the questions, it does not prescribe the solutions. True, but such a course was necessary to secure its being accepted. Besides, as the same programme served for class-teaching and for the B.A. examinations, it could not be said that an orthodox philosophy was imposed at the examinations in the name of the state. The only thing taken for granted was that the existence of God, Providence, the spirituality and the immortality of the soul, free-will and duty, should be everywhere the groundwork of teaching. If a professor had failed on one of these points, he would have immediately felt the weight of M. Cousin's hand. I am far from blaming him for this. Neutral teaching had not been invented then; everyone still had faith, and, thanks to God, I still believe that there is no difference between a neutral teaching and a teaching which is null.

Another point which M. Cousin had conquered was this: every professor had to assign to himself a certain task—study a question of psychology or of metaphysics; translate or annotate an ancient philosopher; draw from oblivion a work of doctrine till then misunderstood. With the exception of a few old men who finished their career in oblivion, the whole of the young university was toiling busily. For it the academies reserved all their laurels. If I was making the *éloge* of M. Cousin, instead of drawing his portrait, I would place side by side

the list of his own works, and that of the works he has suggested; both would be equally honourable for him; for he was not satisfied with inspiring a taste for industry, he was always ready to point out sources, supply ideas, even read over MSS., and show how they ought to be recast in order to become worth publishing. He was, in France, a kind of universal professor.

M. Janet affirms that he was leader of a school, and that at the same time he left the university professors free in their teaching. I contest both points. He has had a few disciples, and these very disciples dissent from him on many topics. His own system was not sufficiently strong, nor did he adhere to it with sufficient perseverance to found a school. This will seem contradictory: he looked upon all professors of philosophy as commissioned to speak in his name. Why did he deliver a third-year course of lectures at the *École*? Because he wished to infuse his spirit into the young masters. He pointed out to them very plainly those amongst his books which they were to take as the basis of their teaching. The inspectors-general gave him the information he required, and when a refractory or hesitating professor came to Paris, he was treated according to his deserts.

Like M. Janet, M. Damiron enlarges on the great freedom which M. Cousin allowed his disciples. I can quite believe that M. Damiron and his friends, fellow-pupils at the *École Normale* of their old comrade who taught philosophy before he had one of his own, were

not under very severe discipline. It was not so later on. The liberty then enjoyed was merely nominal. You were at liberty to break your neck.

M. Janet can procure information from our two colleagues, M. Waddington and M. Hatzfeldt. When the Revolution of February brought to an end Cousin's domination, they were busy composing, under his direction, a handbook of elementary philosophy, where nothing was found but passages from his various books, arranged together so as to form a regular system, complete and irreproachable. It would have been *officially* authorised, and *officiously* prescribed. Philosophy would have had its catechism. It already had its bishop.

How could professors have been free under a chief who had been their teacher at the *École Normale*, and their judge at the *agrégation*; who was their hope at the Academy, who never lost sight of them for a minute, who was kept informed about all they said, read all their works, and enjoyed the most absolute rights over their whole career? And he himself, how could he have been liberal, considering the position he occupied? He wished to be liberal. He was one of those liberals who say: "I am philosophy!" Never could Hegel, Leibnitz, or Descartes have dreamt of enjoying so despotic an authority. France had entrusted to his hands the teaching of philosophy, and I can testify that these hands were as firm as they were powerful.

There remained in Paris two professors attached to M. La Romiguière's doctrine, namely, M. Valette and

M. Safary. It was very well for them that they were titular, and that they had no ambition either so far as the University or the Academy was concerned. When M. Thiers had to draw up the report on the law on secondary instruction, M. Safary ran to him complaining about M. Cousin's despotism. M. Thiers said to me: "I gave him such a dressing!" The funny part of the thing is, that when M. Thiers meddled with philosophy he was nearer La Romiguière, and, consequently, nearer Safary than nearer Cousin. As for Valette, he was urged to take a deputy. "He will hold your place for twelve hundred francs." A tempting offer. Valette resisted. What did they do? Why, the deputy *in fosse* was directed to hold a preliminary *conférence* before the regular lecture. They had selected a young fellow, who had just left the *École Normale*, a kindly nature, and a ready speaker. M. Octave Feuillet, then a pupil in the philosophy class at the Collège Louis le Grand, may remember this circumstance. The students were given to understand that if they wished to get prizes at the *Concours Général* and *white balls* at the B.A. examination, they must listen to the *maître de conférence*, and turn a deaf ear to the professor's lectures.

This domination was very hard to endure; the professors felt humiliated. They suffered especially on account of the narrow limits within which their teaching was cramped. Cousin wanted the university to be faultless, because he saw it very seriously attacked. The professors did not see the peril so clearly as he did

himself. They trusted to him for the care of conjuring it. But here ends the purely administrative *rôle* of M. Cousin. We are nearing his political one, which must be examined separately.

CHAPTER IV.

M. COUSIN'S BATTLES.

PHILOSOPHERS who seek for truth in the recess of their studies are very fortunate. They endeavour to discover it by the means and method which seem to them most efficacious ; and when they have discovered it, they state it without any other *arrière-pensée*, so far as their studies go, than to be exact ; and, so far as their style goes, to be clear.

In former days, in the time of state religions and of absolute power, they had other cares ; for they might, by speaking the truth, endanger their liberty and their life. The most courageous set everything at defiance, and died like heroes. Others dealt artfully with the enemy ; they toned down or concealed their thoughts, and did not say all, so that they might at least say something. Others, finally, looked on the map of the world for a country where people might enjoy the liberty of being right. That is what Descartes did,—who, however, was not deficient in courage.

The teaching of philosophy in educational establishments certainly raises, together with philosophical problems, a political one. Let us, in the first place, set

aside as ignoble the thought of teaching what one does not believe, or of teaching as certain that upon which one entertains doubts. It is quite clear that if you want to give a teaching which includes ethics, and which enforces ethics in all its parts, you must, before everything, have an upright heart and a firm mind. But we may inquire whether every doctrine should be taught to children.

I, the father of a family, want my son to be instructed in philosophy. Do I thereby mean that, according to the professor's caprice, he shall be taught materialism or spiritualism; that it signifies little to me whether or not he is led to believe in God, whether or not he is trained to be a Christian or a foe to Christianity? It is evident that if I am indifferent about the solution of these questions, I ought to prefer their not being raised. The philosophy I require for my son is not *any* philosophy; it is a certain special one. In Paris, where there are several colleges, I shall select from amongst them, after having made sure of what the master's doctrine is. But it may happen that my choice is limited to one of these two alternatives: either no master, or a bad one. For a sensible man the solution cannot be doubtful; he will answer: "No master."

So much for the father of a family. But what will the educating state do? Shall we say of it, what we do not say of the father, namely, that it insists upon a philosophical education, and that it does not care what philosophy is taught? If the state carries indifference thus far, what right has it to give and direct teaching?

Out of respect for atheists, a primary education has lately been invented, which is neutral, *i.e.*, null: that amounts precisely to a primary education, including no philosophical notion; for if philosophy penetrates into it, under whatever form, farewell to neutrality, philosophy being by definition a body of doctrine. If the state, then, teaches philosophy, it teaches something; what shall it teach? Is it to be materialist or spiritualist? atheist or theist? Is it to engage a moral, well-behaved young man with university degrees, give him a thousand crowns, and say to him, "Teach whatever you please"? A funny position indeed for the father of a family, who has never known, or who no longer knows, a word of philosophy, and yet who is obliged to inquire as to the doctrine of the master before entrusting his son to him; further, obliged to follow his teaching, in order to ascertain whether his thought does not undergo any modification; finally, compelled to withdraw the lad suddenly, if in the course of the year the professor is replaced by one holding different opinions—situation not less odd for the state, which displays in everybody's sight doctrines, like goods, from every possible origin, without having examined them, at the risk of selling nothing but poison!

In the days of Hobbes, now far from us, in those of Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau and Robespierre, which are nearer, the state assumed entirely the place of the head of the family. It had the more than enormous pretension of bringing up the children in agreement with its own will, and contrary to the will of the fathers. The

state, I say,—but what state? a state which had doctrines of its own. These doctrines, whatever they might be, served as a cloak for its despotism; for the idea had not yet suggested itself of oppressing people in the name of nothingness. The neutral school imposed by the state is an invention of the nineteenth century. It will be its title to glory.

When M. Cousin was at school (*collège*) the problem was solved. The imperial university, by virtue of its constitution, took the Roman Catholic religion as the basis of its teaching, which is the same as saying that for the university Roman Catholicism was the state religion. When he began to lecture at the Sorbonne, it was under the Restoration; there was accordingly a state religion not only for the university, but for the whole country. The state, having a religion, imposed it upon the professors, who, in their turn, imposed it upon their pupils. No room for liberty; no other teaching but that enforced by the state. Private teaching only existed by its authorisation, under its supervision, or rather under its direction; and even as far as philosophy was concerned, there was no private tuition; you must either know nothing about it, or learn it in one of the state schools. The state alone presided over the examinations which gave admittance to all careers in life, and those alone were qualified to present themselves who had studied philosophy in the state colleges. No room, no refuge for liberty,—I was going to say for philosophy, which I never separate from liberty. Let us add that liberty was con-

quired for the state before being conquered for schools. The Revolution of 1830 did away with state religion everywhere, except in the university, with this difference—which, I shall add, was no small one—that the university was governed by M. Cousin, instead of being under episcopal authority.

M. Cousin admitted perfectly despotism thus transformed. Intellectual royalty pleased him, since it had devolved upon philosophy. For him it was the advent of philosophy to power. Complete error; it was the advent of M. Cousin. Philosophy remained under a sentence of proscription, since freedom remained suppressed. I know free thought, said M. Cousin, and I claim it; but I know nothing of *free teaching*. "It is the state which teaches." This he proclaimed in the same tone as M. de Bonald at the same time proclaimed: "It is the Church which teaches." That great mind confounded the right of teaching Latin, which admits of discussion, with the right of teaching a doctrine. "Free thought is not in question," said he. What, then, O philosopher, is free thought without free speaking?

Under the Restoration he took many liberties with state religion, on his own account. But, on the one hand, he was lecturer in a *faculté*, not professor in a school (*collège*); lecturer in Paris, a distinguished lecturer, a great man. On the other hand, he did not think himself so rash as he really was.

He rightly thought that there is no similarity between

the teaching of the *Faculté*, which is meant for philosophers, and that of schools (*collèges*), which is intended for children. The distinction was all the more legitimate, because in his time, and with his full assent when he was powerful, philosophy-lectures in schools were compulsory. The university alone taught philosophy, and compelled all those who went in for the B.A. degree to study it in its colleges. Under such conditions could it allow its professors to teach whatever they pleased, according to their fancy? And the fathers of families, who, if they were not free to teach, had at any rate the right of refusing to pay the taxes and to vote the budget, would they give their money to support a teaching about which they knew nothing, or which was in opposition to their own will and to their faith? Would they grant their confidence to a government hurting their tenderest feelings by turning in a wrong direction, and upsetting the mind and conscience of their children?

We enjoy now free teaching, and therefore the question does not offer itself with the same evidence and the same authority as in M. Cousin's time. But if the state does not prohibit private schools, it renders their condition difficult, almost impossible. It does not monopolise teaching, but it is nearly the only teaching body. It educates with the help of the money of the country, and with an authority which it owes to the country. The moment it puts forth a doctrine, it must make up its mind to offend no church, and more

particularly not to stand in opposition to Roman Catholicism, since Roman Catholicism is the religion of the immense majority of fathers and of all mothers.

But what is that philosophy made to suit the exigencies of any form of worship? It is no longer philosophy. Ask Cousin if philosophy can tolerate the yoke of faith! On this point he has always been indomitable. Either philosophy must be free, or it shall disappear. You are laughing at us when you talk to us in the nineteenth century of the handmaid of philosophy. Thus spoke the inquisitors. We are in the country of Descartes, and we hold as true all that is demonstrated by the light of reason.

How is it possible to reconcile this independence and this dependence? I see on one side the right of free thought and free talk; on the other the prohibition to attack and go against certain doctrines. Cousin adopts a *concordat*. In my opinion this means inspires him with too much confidence. Philosophy cannot abandon any of its liberties, neither can the Church renounce any of its dogmas. If I was the master, I should get out of the difficulty by transferring to the *facultés* philosophy properly so called, and limiting philosophy in the *lycées* to the searching study of methods and to the reading of some noble book, such as the *Phædo* for antiquity, and the *Discours de la Méthode* for modern times. Cousin prefers insisting on the fact that philosophy and religion have not absolutely the same aim, and do not address themselves to the same minds.

The respective aims are not so opposed as he imagines, and the Church, which alone addresses itself to humble minds, does not consent to abandon the great ones to philosophers. He dwells also upon the orthodoxy of his doctrine, to which the Church answers that the master's orthodoxy is no guarantee for that of the disciples, and that the orthodoxy of to-day is no security for that of to-morrow. It finds fault with him, rather justly, on that self-styled orthodoxy; and, at bottom, when it expresses its unvarnished thought, it shows clearly enough that the question is not about this or that doctrine, but about the right of selecting freely a doctrine, that is to say, the right of being a philosopher. It is curious to hear Cousin saying to philosophers: "You are not free, but be happy, for you have no master but me, who am a philosopher"; then to see him turning towards the Church, and saying: "I claim for myself and for all philosophers absolute freedom; but get rid of all anxiety both for the present and for the future, as my philosophy is orthodox."

He assures us that only bad philosophy and bad theology quarrel with each other. Such is the language of a man who has accepted the direction of high-police in philosophy. The inquisitor who has accepted the high-police of divinity, and the true philosopher who will neither put up with the police nor exercise it, would say quite the reverse.

Cousin tried his best since 1830 to be orthodox, and he endeavoured, without much success, to prove that he

had always been so in former times. He watched over his professors, with the view of compelling them to orthodoxy. The professors complained, as was natural. The Church complained also. It did not admit that pretended orthodoxy; and even if it had admitted it! His being a philosopher was quite enough to bring him under suspicion.

Before 1830, the Church being the state religion, it could attack philosophy in its principle. Obligated, apparently, after 1830, to yield on the question of principle, its ground of attack was pantheism. It discovered pantheism in Cousin's lectures, and in his preface of 1824. It would not listen to his retractations. It ascribed to all philosophers what the master had said on this subject, it furbished up all the stale declamations against pantheism, and repeated on all sides: "Such are the schools of pestilence to which we are compelled to send our children!"

Cousin, I believe, spoke honestly when he maintained that he was no pantheist. I also believe that he accused himself internally of imprudence for having written that if God is not all, He is nothing. But where is the author who, having written much, has not been guilty of some imprudence? When we speak of the relations between God and the world, we are surrounded by shoals on all sides. He would have been puzzled to defend his phrases in themselves; he did better, and with greater skill: he found analogies for them in Saint Augustine. "I am a pantheist," he said, "just as Saint Augustine

was." "Does it not seem as if we should be safe behind the shelter of a Father of the Church,—and such a father?"

We must carefully distinguish, besides, between the *teaching* Cousin anterior to 1830, and the Cousin who, after that date, watched over teaching: the *militant* Cousin and the *governing* one. When I read Cousin's lectures from 1815 to 1830, I think I see sometimes search after effect—that is the orator's vice; sometimes the absence of solution hidden behind the designed obscurity of a formula—that is the vice of the rhetorician; never do I perceive the dread of the master or of the prevailing doctrine. Cousin's mind is free, if it is not always deep. I do not find the same character in the writings he composed since he ruled our philosophy. On the contrary, he seems preoccupied about being wise. He always claims freedom, but we feel that he will not make bad use of it. If he speaks of the relations between the finite and the infinite, you may feel quite sure that he will not repeat his old formulæ. Even when he re-edits his old books, he takes out of them all the venom they contained. His freedom, proclaimed as a principle, is not quite full in practice. He is orthodox in his second manner; I would not reproach him for that if it was fortuitous; but it is designed, and that is what I blame him for. Under these conditions one is not a philosopher; one is only a preacher, a sound and wise preacher.

It seems to me that when I say so, I am not attacking Cousin ^{trick} ^{him}, signing to him his place. he endeavoured, with

He thought that mankind owed its progress to philosophy ; but that to religion it was indebted for peace and happiness. Philosophy is a rule and a consolation for the few only ; it appears in a society well organised and mistress of itself ; it disappears or gets confused in a civilisation on the wane. Even during philosophic ages, if side by side with the *savant* there was not a priest, nearly the whole of the human race would be without a guide. If religion is so necessary for what is good—that is to say, for morality, for consolation, for hope—has philosophy the right of suppressing it ? If you cannot substitute anything in its place, can you suppress it ? The philosopher says of religion, “ It is false ; I shall do without it.” The preacher or the politician answers, “ It is useful ; I shall respect it.”

Speaking as a politician, Cousin says expressly, that to fight against religion, to struggle with it, is a criminal action. In this he resembles Socrates, who gave his opinion about the gods, and wished to offer a libation before drinking hemlock. The whole of enlightened antiquity had ceased to believe, without ceasing to sacrifice. The common people went to the temple out of credulity, and the upper classes out of patriotism.

All the liberals of the Restoration, and Cousin at their head, engaged religion in the service of public morality. As such they respected it, but meant to compel it to discharge its functions after their manner, not after its own. His policy towards religion is that of the *Vicaire Savoyard*, that of the Constituent Assembly, when they

framed the *Constitution Civile du Clergé*; it represents the whole school of Rousseau, to which Cousin belonged. We are astonished at "the two immortal Sisters," because we are no longer in the same train of ideas. The liberals of those days insisted upon receiving the sacraments whilst denying the dogmas. They thought they were liberal because they claimed the sacraments without believing in them, and they called fanatics the priests who refused the sacraments of their Church to those who did not believe in their Church. In the discussions on teaching, and especially on theological schools, they imposed upon the Church obligations and restrictions which they considered liberal because they were profitable to their party, and which the Church deemed encroachments upon its freedom, because they were contrary to its creed and its institution.

We must place ourselves at that stand-point, if we would understand certain doctrines of Cousin and the principal acts of his administration.

He would have no chaplain at the *École Normale*, because a chaplain would have weighed upon the teaching of philosophy, which should be free in that great school. But he asked for the presence of the parish priest in the Cantonal delegation; he loudly declared that there was no possible prosperity for primary teaching without the kind patronage of the clergy, and he placed the learning by heart of the Catechism in the foremost rank of school exercises.

It has often been repeated that he himself had

composed a catechism for the use of schools. A catechism ! That is saying a little more than the truth, and yet not much more: Here is the full title of the little book, which it is not easy to procure now: *Livre d'instruction morale et religieuse, à l'usage des écoles primaires catholiques, élémentaires et supérieures, des écoles normales et des commissions d'examen, autorisé* (this in the second edition) *par le conseil royal de l'Instruction publique. Paris et Strasbourg, chez Levrault. 1834. 18mo, of 260 pages.* This book is preceded by a notice which reads like a ministerial circular: "Here is the book required by the law of June 28th, 1833, which so rightly places moral and religious instruction in the first rank amongst the objects of the people's education." Then come sundry pieces of advice, or rather orders, given to the masters of the different degrees of teaching. The professor (of the normal schools) must give a regular instruction which all the pupils may be able to take down in writing, so that at the end of the course of lectures their several abstracts may produce a regular course of doctrine The present compendium of moral and religious instruction should form the basis of that teaching." The *avertissement* is not less imperative for examination-boards: "The examination-boards are requested to guard against two contrary defects into which they might fall: either to set to the candidates only questions of history, or to propose to them exclusively questions of doctrine In the general examination which should crown and terminate the course of the elementary

school, and serve as a basis to the holiday certificates of every child, moral and religious instruction shall have its rank as every other branch of teaching, with a mention of the number obtained." In this *avertissement* we see Cousin's manner in every line, and also the ideas which fill his reports on primary teaching in Holland and Germany. The book is divided into two parts. The former describes all that which, in the history of the human race and "according to the plans of Divine Providence," has prepared the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and of His doctrine; the latter is a statement of that doctrine itself. After having added that the historical part consists of extracts from the Scriptures, and that the dogmatical part is taken from the most celebrated catechisms, the author condescends to inform us that "these extracts, solely designed for schools, are not meant to supplant the diocesan catechism, which retains the right of preparing for the religious exercises which belong to the Church."

I do not know whether this concession made to the bishops was of a nature to reassure them on their superior right to teach religion themselves, and whether this declaration of agreement with the most celebrated catechisms sufficiently informed them as to the orthodoxy of the book. The question might be asked, why the unity of the book was necessary in the university, and why the royal council had supposed that there could be diversity of doctrine in the catechisms of the various dioceses? On the other hand, since the

diocesan catechism was retained, what was the use of the university catechism side by side with it? Was there in this enterprise a reminiscence of the Empire, which had likewise wanted to impose one exclusive catechism? The Empire had got for its catechism the approval of the ecclesiastical authority, which was far more regular: it had imposed it everywhere, which was far more despotic. This one was made obligatory in schools alone: but all schools, and those who sent it forth, perhaps, flattered themselves with the hope of seeing, in course of time, this catechism, so recommended and so popular, taking the place of all the others.

The clergy did not feel too excited by this very bold attempt, which placed religious teaching in the hands of the royal council, its lay-inspectors and its masters. It had its representative in all the degrees of university administration, and the *outside*-bishop was eliminated without any fuss for the benefit of the real ones. That *outside*-bishop, who was no other than Cousin, dared neither to remonstrate nor to show himself. Am I wrong in ascribing to him the paternity of the book? I confess that he did not sign it, but he composed it. In the first place, he certainly approved of it, together with the other members of the council; the approbation has certainly been proposed by him; he certainly wrote the *avertissement*; there are certainly throughout the book numerous pages of which he is the author. The rest, made up of various extracts, has it been taken by himself from "the Scriptures and the most celebrated

catechisms"? I believe so. The catechism is not uninteresting, and is comparatively clear:—"Q. What is meant by the expression that the Son is consubstantial with the Father?—A. We mean that He participates in His substance. Q. How can we conceive that?—A. The Father cannot subsist for a moment without knowing Himself, and by knowing Himself He produces His Son." (If the author annotated his book, he would not fail to write at the bottom of the page, "Thought is the thought of thought.") "Q. How is it that the Holy Ghost has the same nature as the Father and the Son?—A. The Father and the Son cannot subsist for a moment without loving each other, and in loving each other they produce the Holy Ghost." And a little further on: "Q. How is it that these two natures (the divine one and the human one) constitute one person in Jesus Christ?—A. Nearly in the same manner as the soul and the body in us make one man."

The Restoration had forced upon the professors in the colleges a kind of comedy of credulity rather ignoble. The pupils were also compelled to act that comedy, by presenting every month a ticket showing that they had been confessed. There remained something of that sad past in the university manners and habits after 1830, although the conversion of the university had been complete and noisy, too noisy even for the honour of the university, after so long a submission. All this is somewhat forgotten at the close of the century, but it is history, nevertheless. Since 1830, there was no religious

teaching at the *École Normale*; but attendance at low mass was compulsory on Sundays. (In course of time it became optional; on the other hand, in course of time likewise, a chaplain was appointed.) Attendance at mass then was enforced on Sundays during the time of my stay as pupil at the *École Normale* (1833-1836), with M. Cousin as councillor-director, and M. Guigniaut as director under his orders. Everyone was obliged to bring his book. Some of the pupils conspired together not to bring one. They were punished by detention. The next Sunday they brought their books, and took their seats on purpose in front of M. Guigniaut, who was soon quite surprised at their attention. He wanted to get clear on the subject. He took his neighbour's book. It was a copy of Lucretius, the Leyden edition of 1725, *cum notis variorum*. He looked at it very solemnly, and then returned it to the pupil (Amédée Jacques), saying to him in an undertone of voice: "You had better procure the edition of Bentley and Wakefield, London, 1796." They read Lucretius in chapel, but they held a book. The honour of the university was satisfied.

Cousin did not require his professors to attend mass. I even believe that he would have found it improper in them to do so, unless they were really staunch Catholics. He insisted only on their being respectful towards religion and towards the clergy. He absolutely ruled that there should not be a word in the teaching of college-professors which might seem directed either against the respect due to religious systems or against their

dogmas. We used all of us to teach the independence of thought, and, consequently, that of philosophy; on that point he was as firm as any of us. We avoided with the greatest care alluding to questions of a purely theological nature, such as the Trinity, the Fall, Redemption: But, besides theological doctrines, religions have also philosophical ones. They have beliefs in the spirituality and immortality of the soul, the liberty of man, ethics, creation. If a professor in a college, or even in a *faculté*, had expressed doubts as to the spirituality of the soul, or man's free will, and Cousin had been informed of it, he would infallibly have been removed to an inferior post, or dismissed altogether. It was not, on Cousin's part, an encroachment upon our individual liberty, for we might think and speak whatever we chose, provided we kept away. It might even be maintained that he could not allow us the freedom of saying everything without offending the liberty of our pupils and their families. As it was necessary to attend the college lessons on philosophy, if we wished to go in for the B.A. degree, the certificate of studies having been abolished only after the Revolution of 1848, it would have been impossible to compel a Christian family to attend an infidel teaching. The rule was this: for all that belongs to the province of religion, neutrality; for all that belongs to the province of philosophy, spiritualism, deism.

Cousin has related to me that during his ministry the King Louis Philippe said to him several times: "Don't

get me into scrapes with that good queen." The queen, who never meddled with politics, interfered in religious subjects; and when she was told that matters were going wrong in that direction, she entreated the king to become wise. The king was only too glad to do so, and so was Cousin (since his advent to greatness), and he asked us, as he knew how to ask, "not to get him into difficulties." More than one of us have forsaken philosophy for history or political economy for no other motive but these warnings, which were paternal, but decisive and intelligible.

I have already said that our provincial comrades came every year during the summer vacations, and even sometimes at the Easter ones, to be reviewed by the sovereign master of our destinies. Cousin had his favourites, who were none else but the most industrious and the most deserving; for I cannot insist too much upon this point: he was at bottom extremely just, and, on reflecting, we always discovered the motive of what had at first seemed to us a mere caprice.

That complicated man, of whom I could quote acts of stinginess and acts of munificence, had a whim which is not common amongst all-powerful administrators. He was fond of getting together his young professors, and of treating them to dinner. He was, as you know, a bachelor. He lived at the Sorbonne, in his library, for that is the name we must give to his lodgings. No cooking there. In the morning he used to eat a plate of cabbage-soup, or some bread with a

honey-comb, or some similar treat—a true anchorite repast. In the evening he dined with his high and mighty friends,—for this philosopher was rather worldly ; he was fond of first-class society, though he did not belong to it, and enjoyed the praise bestowed upon him there. On the rare days when he was not invited, he took some one of us to dine at a *restaurant*. It was almost always I who had that honour during the first years, and we even ended by dining at Risbecq's, Place de l'Odéon, each one paying his share of the banquet. I have never been, I think, so near his heart as Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Franck, Bouillier, and perhaps, a little later on, Caro and Janet, but we were very intimate together. In vacation-time he gave dinner-parties to the pick of our provincials. I beg you to believe that it was without any display ; but we dined very decently, and on those occasions the host was of a charming *bonhomie*.

It happened one day that he could not receive five or six of our comrades who had come to ring at his door. This annoyed him extremely. "I know where to find them," said I to him ; "I shall send them to you to-morrow." "Do better ; go and invite them to dinner for this evening." "I'm off." "Invite them, and any others you may chance to meet," cried he to me on shutting his door. "The dinner will be at Pinson's, at seven o'clock." I invited quite a dozen. I came back to fetch him, about half-past six, rather down in the mouth. I had just remembered that it was Good Friday. That was my first word, as I entered his study.

"Ah! what a nuisance!" said he to me. "How is it that we did not think of it this morning? And they will be at Pinson's in a quarter of an hour. Too late to stop their going?" "Too late!" "We might go and fetch them, and bring them here. Madame Blanchard would cook us a dinner." I knew by sad experience the talents of his housekeeper; but anything was better than a scandal. We set about measuring the table; it could not, decidedly, seat more than six, and there were fourteen of us. "Come what may," said he, "we shall dine off fish, and if we catch a knock or two, we must shake ourselves." The dinner was a most amusing one. Vacherot attempted to talk metaphysics, and Franck psychology, each one according to his ruling passion; but Cousin discoursed all the time on the duty of not dining at the *restaurants* on Good Friday.

He had no other disengaged day; nor had he any house wherein to receive us. As we dined, we held our little bi-annual conference; there was nothing, said he, which savoured of festivity. Philosophy was threatened. If it came to blows, he would take the whole burden upon his shoulders, without allowing anyone to claim his share in the fray; but, in order to make defence possible on our side, our teaching must, in the first place, be irreproachable. "Don't let yourselves be addressed on the subject of religion, even in private conversation. The Trinity? Original Sin? Redemption? That's no business of mine. Apply to my venerable colleague, the chaplain of the college. I may have a

religion of my own. That's my private concern. In my capacity as a professor, I demonstrate truths which are common to all forms of worship. I am the auxiliary of every one of them ; I ought, I can, I will not be a hindrance for none of them. But," added he solemnly, "there is pantheism!" (Pantheism, then, was the great objection against him, and, consequently, against the university.) "Pantheism, gentlemen" (I leave out a refutation of pantheism, mixed up with invectives which would not have been disowned by the Abbé Combalot, who was preaching a course of Lent lectures a few yards off),—"if you are accused of pantheism, go at once to the bishop's." That was his grand resource. He believed, or pretended to believe, that his professors of philosophy enjoyed their *grandes entrées* at the episcopal palace.

During our third year's stay at the *École Normale* he had described to us beforehand what we had to do at the bishop's residence, the speeches we were to make, the answers we were sure to receive. I do not believe, by-the-bye, that he himself was very assiduous at the levies of the Archbishop of Paris. He excelled in thus making up little comic scenes, and he acted them (the expression is not too strong) with the talent of a thorough comedian. In these extemporised *saynètes* the philosopher was always a kind of second-rate statesman, and the bishop a very profound theologian :—" 'My lord, I am accused of pantheism. It is true ; I am a pantheist . . . just as St. Augustine was,'—and here you quote to

him all the passages of St. Augustine which would be more reprehensible than mine, if for both of us everything was not subordinate to our doctrines on free-will and divine grace." "Mind what you are about," added he, "because the bishop is no fool. Talleyrand has often told me that there is nothing to sharpen one's wits like theological studies. He was quite right. All diplomatists should begin by going to the school of Saint-Sulpice. Don't discuss with him! Bring him always back to the question of free-will: on that ground you are invincible. What is substance without causality? 'Will you agree, my lord, that I believe in the independence of our judgments and the freedom of our actions?' You believe in those things more perhaps than he would like. If he looks threatening, rise immediately: 'My lord, I depend upon my chief, M. Cousin.' At that point I interfere" ("*j'interviens alors!*" uttered after the fashion of Rodrigue in *Le Cid*: "*nous nous levons alors!*"). He took occasion of this incident to describe with extraordinary *brio* the sitting of the Chamber of Peers, where he meant to stand up for philosophy. From all the neighbouring towns persons had rushed to hear all these fine things, and to see M. Cousin dining that day at the *cabaret*. I often thought, in 1844, when he so valiantly faced all opinions gathered against him, that he was gifted with second-sight in 1838.

It is precisely at the moment when he was becoming very prudent that the war against philosophy, which was really a war against him, assumed serious proportions.

The day after the July Revolution, M. de Montalembert and the Abbé Lacordaire had claimed the right of free teaching. They had claimed it with the utmost honesty, because they wanted it and loved it. M. Veuillot did not want it, but, as a consummate politician, he guessed that if he, too, claimed it, he would puzzle extremely certain adversaries, who could not refuse it to him except by violating their principles. He committed no hypocrisy. He roundly said: "You cannot refuse me liberty, because it is part of your principles. As for me, if I was in power, I would refuse it to you, because it is against *my* principles." Some one immediately answered: "So, if you ask for liberty, it is only with the view of crushing it." But M. Veuillot's *arrière-pensée* did not prevent liberty from being liberty, and right from being right. Those who answered him in the newspapers did not pen a single sentence which was not crushing for themselves.

"I take this weapon," said he, "and I wrest it from your own hands, because I have no other wherewith to upset you, and upset you I must, you eclectics, you pantheists, because you are the enemies of my faith." If Cousin answered that he was no pantheist,—*"Supposing you were not one!"* retorted Louis Veuillot. "You are certainly no materialist; you have never been one. And yet materialism is one of my complaints against you, because you represent philosophy, and all the rights which you claim for yourself, materialism will claim for itself, when its time comes, which is not far distant."

He was a strong wrestler, was Veuillot : Cousin long pretended to spurn him, but was, nevertheless, seriously troubled by him. Veuillot was the chief of numerous allies, who acknowledged him neither as their chief, nor as their ally. All of them combined—the implacable enemy of liberty, who made use of it whilst detesting it, and the noble friends of liberty, who claimed it for its own sake—did their best to prove to the Roman Catholics that official philosophy (such a title could with strict accuracy be applied to M. Cousin's teaching) was contrary to the philosophy owned, patronised, and superintended by their Church. Auxiliaries came to them from all sides. The *Univers* newspaper was warmly supported by the whole religious and legitimist press, from which it was, on other topics, separated by an abyss. Here controversy was learned, clever, closely argued ; with Veuillot it howled and bellowed, at the same time losing nothing of its solidity. If he shouted, it was with the view of attracting and bringing together the boobies. He dragged on the scene the members of the university with the most irresistible *vis comica*. I do not know whether the others laughed at it, but I often did so as at a good comedy-scene, somewhat *burlesque*, but very spicy ; then I felt more frequently indignant, for he was not straightforward ; he had his peculiar way of tampering with texts ; he ascribed to one writer what belonged to another ; he drew inferences which had never been implied in the principles from which he pretended to deduce them ; he ascribed sinister purposes

to his adversaries ; he even went so far as to charge them with vices. He was like a bull-dog, filling France with his yelling against the poor university men held in leash by Cousin, and condemned by him to silence. When his newspaper was not enough, he wrote pamphlets. Everybody read his *Libres Penseurs*, which no one would read now, because there is a fashion for pamphlets as well as for novels ; and Veuillot, great as he was, could not be compared to Pascal. Amongst his imitators, who were numerous, we must name Des Garets, the author of the *Monopole Universitaire*. This fellow had only caught Veuillot's coarseness, but he had his readers, because the fight against the eclectics was a popular one. Even bishops took part in the fray. I remember a pastoral letter of the Bishop of Chartres, where I was accused of having written two big volumes to ask for the re-establishment of divorce. Now, I have never written two big volumes on the subject, nor one big volume, nor even a small volume. I did write a short chapter on divorce, but not to petition for its re-establishment ; on the contrary, I fought against it with my utmost might and main, for during my whole life I have been its decided and passionate adversary. I quote this example to show how far polemical violence can lead astray serious and unquestionably sincere men. At the time when they hurled that heavy stone at my head, I was in bad odour at the university, because I was in agreement with its enemies to ask for the suppression of the university monopoly. M. Cousin blamed me for

years. Cousin had a great deal to do ; in the first place to prevent his professors from giving by their teaching an excuse for criticism ; then, when, in spite of every precaution, criticism presented itself, to oblige them to leave it unanswered. When they complained of that law which forced them to be silent, he would say : " I take the responsibility of everything." But people thought that he was too silent, and almost accused him of conniving with the enemy. It is within the university that some one said, for the first time, " He will be a cardinal,"—a very harmless joke, of which he has not been the only victim. At last the organic law of 1844 afforded him an opportunity of speaking, nay, made it for him a matter of obligation.

He collected his speeches delivered before the Chamber of Peers in April and May 1844, and published them in a curious volume, entitled *Défense de l'Université et de la Philosophie*. This is a very important historical document, showing what was the state of opinion at that time amongst the philosophers and the Roman Catholics, the liberals and the conservatives. Cousin displays there a fund of knowledge both very extensive and very varied, a good deal of vigour and of philosophic spirit, besides real eloquence. On the very rare occasions when he had ascended the rostrum, whether the audience intimidated him, or the subjects of which he spoke were new to him, he had only made speeches without brilliancy and without bearing ; one could recognise in them neither the great philosopher, nor the

parts assumed both by plaintiffs and defendant. Received first with a certain coldness tempered by curiosity, then with increasing favour, he soon felt himself master of the assembly, and victor over his adversaries. They did not yield to him on all points, but they grudged him neither marks of admiration nor sympathy, and, on the whole, he had the glory of preserving philosophy and the university from the ostracism which threatened them.

M. de Montalembert was making his *début* at the Chamber when he claimed the freedom of teaching; Cousin answered him, with great respect for him individually, but with still greater *hauteur* so far as doctrine was concerned, that the freedom asked would not be granted. There never was in France any such thing as free teaching. No trace of it either under the *ancien régime* or the republic. It is not the Empire which gave to the state supreme authority in all educational questions. The state receives that authority from the national tradition, and has strongly organised it for the glory and tranquillity of the country. The state cannot and must not give it up. Not only does the state itself teach, because it has the cure of souls and possesses a doctrine, no one teaches independently of it, without its authorisation and its sanction. Every private teaching is under its jurisdiction. Leibnitz used to say: "Place within my hands teaching for a century, and I shall be master of the state." Napoleon was fond of repeating that idea; Cousin repeats it after them, adding in these very words that the state is responsible for what it allows, just as

much as for what it does itself; that such is the constant tradition of the old monarchy and of all civilised societies. Never has freedom of teaching been denied and cast aside with so much clearness and frankness. Cousin does not even conceal that he stands up for lay-authority with the same arguments as those employed in the opposite camp to defend ecclesiastical authority. He claims for the state all the rights which the Ultramontanists claim for the Church. It is not the university alone which he defends, then, but the university monopoly.

On this point, as I have already had the occasion of saying with regret, all the liberals of the day sided with him. He was even less severe for private visitors than most of his friends, since he felt inclined to suppress the certificate of studies. He voted for the maintenance, in order to keep the pupils away from the Jesuits, but he really was not in favour of the principle. Then he was the most liberal amongst liberals, which does not imply that he was a liberal in educational matters. Under the Restoration the liberals only aimed at one thing : wresting from the clergy the power they enjoyed as teachers, and exercising it in their place. This power they had seized upon after 1830; they exercised it with the same security and the same strictness. In this part they were inferior to the Roman Catholics, for two reasons : in the first place, they could not, like the Catholics, claim infallibility, and stand up as the possessors, the detainers of the truth ; in the next, they styled themselves liberals

at the very moment when, suppressing the freedom of teaching, they reduced liberty of conscience to the inward right upon which no human power can encroach. M. Cousin and the majority of the Chamber of Peers did not understand liberty. He used to say to M. de Montalembert: "It is not freedom which complains; it is the spirit of domination which grumbles." Everything was safe, according to him, so long as the university had a good scheme of studies and a blameless teaching.

But, said Ségur-Lamoignon, Barthélemy-Sauvaise, Beugnot, Barthe, and even, with many reservations and compliments, the Duc de Broglie, the teaching of the university, and university administration, which is only the extension of university teaching, agitate and trouble the minds of the young, instead of calming and strengthening them. You teach Cartesianism, said one; that is to say, methodical doubt. You are an eclectic, said the other, consequently you admit all doctrines, which is tantamount to rejecting them all. Your whole efforts, it was repeated on all sides, end in pointing out difficulties, without being able to solve them. Then came the everlasting argument derived from pantheism: "M. Cousin has said that God is in everything, and that He is the substance of everything." Where Cousin really showed his superiority was whilst answering all these arguments directed against his philosophy. The danger for him was to enter too much into the discussion, and thus make of the senate a kind of academic assembly. He limited himself to very

general indications, but very firm ones, which, without giving occasion for subtleties, carried conviction to sincere minds. The exaggerations and sophistries of his adversaries did him a good turn. Did you not prove your own ignorance by seeing in methodical doubt a step towards scepticism? Could you not demonstrate the existence of God, after the manner of Bossuet and Fénelon, without bringing up all the problems of the relations which exist between cause and substance on the one side, and phenomena on the other? If you drive God from even elementary teaching, do you not run the risk of driving Him from the conscience, nay, from the heart of men? Whilst he spoke, everyone around him felt the danger there was for an assembly consisting of generals, magistrates, *savants*, barristers, and one professor of philosophy, to launch into metaphysical disquisitions; and, fancy, there was one amendment which proposed to have the programme of philosophy drawn up in a cabinet council! There was an immense explosion of laughter when M. Cousin undertook to relate beforehand the sitting of the council, where Marshal Soult would give his opinion respecting the origin of our ideas. Cousin issued from these discussions with great success. The whole university felt grateful, and expressed loudly its gratitude.

One source of grief, however, remained in the hearts of the philosophers. They felt that on certain points they had been too well defended. Their wisdom had been too completely established. They were both

saved and disgraced. Their *laicity* was allowed, that was something; but they had no leave to be independent. Whilst saying that philosophy had been taught in France for five hundred years, and that Royer-Collard had borrowed from the old university the programme followed in the colleges under the Restoration, Cousin added that, far from extending that programme, he had narrowed it. Quite true! Jouffroy's former wailing on the lowering of philosophy was universally re-echoed.

The idea struck me of appealing to the great masters in philosophy, and of placing our teaching under their protection. I made an agreement with Charpentier, the publisher, whose friend I was, and I secured the collaboration of Amédée Jacques and of Saisset. The collection was to form ten volumes. I immediately edited one taken from the works of Descartes, adding to it a rather long introduction. Amédée Jacques issued two volumes of Leibnitz, and Saisset the writings of Euler. We had reached that point, and our small collection was succeeding very well. The selections I had made were highly approved, so was the programme I had drawn out, when I suddenly received from Cousin a letter summoning me to his house, with the view of deliberating on the Charpentier series. I mentioned this to both my collaborators, who, like me, were summoned. Jacques was very much surprised; Saisset was less so, and for obvious reasons. Cousin received us in his library, where we found Franck, Vacherot, Riaux, and Bouillier. He informed us that he had had the idea of making a

collection, that he had settled the programme, and that there was even a beginning of carrying it out. This news completely dumfounded both Jacques and myself. If we had not affixed our names to the editions of Descartes and Leibnitz, I saw the moment when we would have been ousted out of our idea. The chief result was to add to the list of authors Father Buffier and Father André, who, I own, had never entered my thoughts. Cousin undertook to edit the philosophical works of Father André, which was for us both a great and unexpected honour. It was not easy to escape from him.

This way of proceeding had something strange about it, but, after due consideration, I can account for his conduct. It was in agreement with the *ensemble* of his ideas, which were essentially monarchical. Just as he ascribed to the state all power in teaching-matters, thus leading directly to a state-doctrine, so he did not wish that an undertaking destined to form part of college-instruction, and to become its principal tool, should be removed from his influence. That is how he acted in the case of M. Franck's *Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*; but this time with the sanction and at the request of the real author of the work, to whom he left both the responsibility and the honour of it. When I thought of founding a philosophical review, I again applied to Jacques and Saisset, and Saisset once more ran to warn Cousin. We were not, Jacques and I, rebels; still less were we ungrateful; we were disciples somewhat stifling for want

of air, in quest of freedom and independence. Saisset, who was a finished politician, and wished to be on a good footing at court, hastened to give a statement of our plans, and, I believe, of our hopes. This time we were so irritated that we threw him overboard. We hastened to bring out a first number, which we christened with a title intended to establish our autonomy, and which indeed secured it. The title was, *la Liberté de Penser*. It has made its way since altering somewhat its meaning. Nowadays, in the current parlance, a free-thinker signifies an atheist, the very opposite of what we were, Jacques and I. I have not to relate here how, for a whole year, by signed articles, by anonymous or pseudonymous ones, I was the chief contributor to the periodical; nor have I to relate how one fine morning I was dismissed by my own friends, on the ground that I was too much of a reactionary for their new aspirations. M. Cousin felt very dissatisfied with the new review. He did not show his disapprobation so abruptly as I should have thought. If the review had lasted, and if I had continued to direct it, it would certainly have been respectful towards him, but it would have secured the independence of the professors of philosophy. They would have ceased to be echoes, and would have become persons.

It disappeared. Everything was giving way, everything was disappearing. M. Cousin had, in 1849, another great fit of activity as an administrator; it was the last. He formed part of the board named by M. de

Falloux to prepare the law of 1850. This board consisted of twenty-six members, including five university-men and two or three liberals. M. Thiers acted as president. The deliberation was hardly anything else but a dialogue between himself and M. Dupanloup. M. Dupanloup had a considerable majority; but M. Thiers, who was in the minority, had, in the first place, his own personal merit, and, in the second, his authority in the Chamber. Without him, M. de Falloux and his board could do nothing.

M. Thiers came to power with the avowed desire of allying himself to the Roman Catholics, and of making use of their support to save society, which was threatened. He thought society more threatened than it really was. Anyhow, it became necessary to defend it. He had done so by his books and his speeches; he wanted to continue his work now through an alliance with the bishops. It was a new epoch in his life. It was also a new epoch in the history of Roman Catholicism, which, in order to destroy the university monopoly, appealed ardently to liberty. To accept freedom of teaching, and to court an alliance with the clergy, was all one in 1849. How far from the Inquisition era! M. Thiers wrote to M. Madier de Montjau, the father of the present deputy: "As for the freedom of teaching, I have changed! Not through a revolution in my convictions, but through a revolution in the state of society. When the university represented the good and wise French *bourgeoisie*, training our children according to Rollin's methods,

preferring the wholesome and ancient classical studies to the physical and material studies extolled by the champions of professional education, oh ! then I wished to sacrifice to it freedom of teaching." Just the spirit of old-fashioned liberals, for whom facts were everything and principles hardly anything. The convert, however, granted only what he condescended to grant, but that amounted to a good deal. Not only did he concede freedom of teaching, at which I rejoice—for I have always wished for it, and been its champion,—but he made up his mind to the lessening of the university, which was justified neither by facts nor by principles. Seconded by M. de Montalembert, M. Dupanloup advocated, under the name of liberty, a return to clerical domination. M. Thiers, supported by M. Cousin, maintained a few vestiges of the university. In order to succeed, it required all the authority of the one, and all the eloquence of the other. In the course of the discussion an open rupture was sometimes nearly taking place. Amongst other things, the Roman Catholics wanted to hand over primary instruction exclusively to the religious congregations. Cousin pleaded energetically the cause of lay-teachers, and succeeded in preserving them from exclusion. In secondary teaching, M. de Falloux and his friends wanted the recall of the Jesuits. M. Thiers and M. Cousin opposed this so firmly, that the idea had to be given up. M. Dupanloup proposed the clause—"The congregations recognised by the Church." "No," said Cousin, "we must write,

‘recognised by the Church and the State.’” This was bringing all the weight of the discussion to bear upon the Jesuits, whom the state does not recognise. The Roman Catholics, defeated on the *recall*, asked for silence, at any rate. If the Jesuits were not mentioned in the law, M. de Falloux would admit them. When he was gone they would see. They carried the vote on this point; the discussion was a very excited one; it was not particularly courageous on their part, nor was it strictly honest on the part of the others. Altogether, the law of 1850 was considered by the Catholics as a triumph, and by the university as a defeat. The university was angry with M. Thiers, who had been its champion in 1842, and with M. Cousin, in whom it centred all its hopes. It was aware that M. Cousin had defended it, and had fought the Jesuits; but he had given way on the certificate of studies, on the degrees, on the examination-boards, on the very name of university, on the Jesuits themselves! He had granted to the Jesuits only silence, but with that they were quite satisfied. Silence, with M. de Falloux as minister, implied for them the permission to return to France and teach. He had helped in that compromise. He had, besides, made an enthusiastic apology in favour of the other congregations, scarcely more accepted by the university than the Jesuits, and he had begun again his old speeches on “the two immortal Sisters.” Nothing of all this was popular, and freedom of teaching was less popular still than the rest. I was perhaps the only member of the university to

defend it, together with the late editor of the *Globe*, M. Dubois, who formed part of the committee, but took no share in the debates.

The events of the end of 1851, which changed everything in France, dispersed our little philosophical world. The teaching of philosophy was deprived even of its name. There was, in the colleges, merely a class of logic. I need not say that Cousin had lost his regiment.

Jacques went to meet death in South America. I gave up teaching, in order to avoid taking the oath of fidelity to the Empire. The newspapers were closed against us. These were hard times, especially for men obliged to depend on their work for daily bread. I continued to see M. Cousin, but less frequently. I had been his deputy-lecturer for upwards of ten years. He had now as an assistant one of my pupils, far superior to myself, and of whom with much reason he was more satisfied. He entertained great admiration for the Empire, and this contributed to estrange us from each other. He did not serve it, however, and he could easily have done so. Honours and emoluments would have been showered down upon him. He thought that retirement was more dignified. He had given up all his posts, and belonged now to the university only by his title and his salary as lecturer at the Sorbonne. He abandoned them both in 1852. He retained his lodgings at the Sorbonne. He could not move his library, nor would he have done so, because he had made a point of bequeathing it, ready installed, to the

university. Almost all his friends had been exiled. The banishment of M. Thiers, which he regretted above all, lasted a year. Cousin lived in his library and in the academies. He visited the friends of his youth, M. Mignet especially, with whom he mourned over the absence of M. Thiers. He did not forsake his philosophers, Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Franck, Vacherot, Bouillier; nor the younger ones, M. Caro, M. Paul Janet, M. Ch. Waddington. On the other hand, he somewhat neglected philosophy. During the last years of his life he published scarcely anything but literary works, of which I shall now give the nomenclature, rather than the analysis, with the view of completing these *souvenirs*.

CHAPTER V.

M. COUSIN'S LOVES.

I HEARD M. Cousin one day say to a philosopher who was thinking of deserting, and of launching forth in historical criticism: "Do not seek so much space; *nolite expatiari*; keep digging the same furrow; give yourself the merits and the profits of perseverance. If you write on all sorts of subjects, you may show perhaps the versatility of your mind; you will not exhibit its strength. You must have *one* career; you must give unity to your life."

Cousin's place in philosophy has been so great that we can say that he has remained faithful to the above doctrine. He might with impunity produce works treating of literature and erudition; he was nevertheless for his contemporaries, and he will remain for posterity, a philosopher. Those who think that he has been less a philosopher than a preacher of philosophy, and that, like Cicero, he has liked above all in philosophy a noble and attractive style of literature, will say perhaps that his digressions have been very long, that they have absorbed more than one-third of his intellectual life, and that when once he penetrated into the study of the seventeenth

century he drew from it so many beautiful narratives and curious portraits, that he seems to delight quite as much in his intercourse with Madame de Longueville as in the company of Xenophanes and Proclus. The truth is that he has not written less than nine volumes on the ladies and the society of the seventeenth century. I am seeking how he was led to do so. A casual incident sometimes suffices to produce a book. A MS. of Abélard, discovered in a country library, draws M. Cousin's attention to that hero of scholasticism, whose history is more affecting than his works. Another time it is a MS. of Pascal which falls into his hands, and gives him the opportunity of showing that behind the Pascal we possessed, there was another Pascal, truer and greater still. I might also quote the discovery of Malebranche's letters, which revealed to him Father André, and produced for our benefit an interesting little volume. And yet Cousin is no slave to fancy; everything in him betokens reflexion; he takes up every work at its set hour; and, to borrow his own expression, "he gives unity to his life." When the 1820 reaction allows him leisure, he publishes one translation and two editions; but of whom?—of Plato, Proclus, and Descartes, his three inspirers, his three masters; then, after having thus settled his business with the past, he starts for Germany, where Kant, says he, has produced in philosophy as great a revolution as our political one of 1789, and where he is going to meet his two new masters, Schelling and Fichte.

It is Pascal, I think, who began to turn him aside from

philosophy, properly so called. What ! a philosopher ? Yes, and a very great one, but a little troubled, gone somewhat astray, a great invalid, the honour and the scourge of philosophy ; tormented by imbecile reason, shaking it vigorously and tragically, without being able to get rid of it. Cousin thought of Pascal during a whole year ; he has written on Pascal a very philosophical volume, above all very literary, a decidedly matchless work of criticism. With this book is connected an episode of his life which we must not exaggerate, which created a great noise for three whole months, and which is not much to his credit. It really is nothing but an *historiette*.

Amongst Jouffroy's papers sufficient materials had been found for a volume of *mélanges*. The widow entrusted these MSS., which needed only a few insignificant corrections, to Damiron, her late husband's faithful friend ; Damiron, whom M. Cousin was wont to call " the wisest of the wise, a man whom no one has ever seen without loving him." The most important of these MSS. was a kind of autobiography, where Jouffroy sketched especially the history of his thought. This fragment circulated, before being sent to press, amongst the *faithful*, and we were all charmed and touched by it. One found there all the candour, all the loftiness of that choice soul. Damiron offered it to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, which accepted it eagerly ; and it was agreed between himself and M. Buloz that I would read over the MS. with care, and correct the proofs. Thus said, thus done. The day before, or two

days before the *Revue* was to appear, Damiron called upon me to take the sheets already signed for *press*, and carried them away to cast at them a final glance.

It was on a Saturday. On leaving me, Damiron went off to the sitting of the Academy of Ethical Science, where his place was next to Cousin's. He walks in, puts his hat in front of him, and deposits the proofs in his hat. Cousin, who, according to custom, was watching everything, perceives some printer's proofs. "What is that?" "Jouffroy's memoir, which I spoke to you about, and which you would not read in the MS." The sitting was not an interesting one. Cousin takes the proof and glances at it. He immediately falls upon the sentence, so often quoted, where, alluding to his stay and to his studies at the *École Normale*, Jouffroy complains that nothing was talked about except the origin of our ideas, and not the problem of man's destiny, which was then, as it was all his life, his chief preoccupation,—"philosophy was in a hole. . . ."; and he concluded with these words: "That is what we owed to the ignorance of our young master." A very harmless statement, do you not think? and all the more so, because Jouffroy, who did not then see all the importance of the problem of the origin of ideas, soon understood it, and plunged into it, "like his young master." Now, that young master was Cousin, then making his *début* as professor of philosophy before being a philosopher—a circumstance which in France, then, was common to everybody. This word, so simple, so true, which would have offended no one, which prob-

ably would have passed unnoticed, seemed to him a mortal offence. How could Jouffroy have written it? and how could Damiron and others have allowed it to be printed? "You will strike it out." "I certainly shall not. I can complete a sentence left unfinished, correct a faulty one, but as for changing the author's thought, that is what I neither can, should, nor will do." Then Damiron undertook the task of proving to him, what would have been easy with anybody else, that this criticism, if it was one, was very inoffensive, and would not affect his glory. Cousin did not take the trouble to discuss. He ran off to Madame Jouffroy's house; she understood merely that her husband was Cousin's pupil and friend; he had had no intention of offending him, and if the expression he made use of seemed too severe, it was an error committed when he first wrote the sentence, and which he certainly would have corrected himself. The phrase was altered—a trifle, one word put instead of another, a correction which would, from every point of view, much better not have been made. Damiron resisted obstinately, Buloz protested loudly; but Madame Jouffroy, on whose behalf Cousin was at that very time soliciting a pension, imposed her will, and the article appeared *minus* the objectionable clause. The whole story was published the same day by Pierre Leroux, who was on the watch, and whose articles were collected together, on the following month, in a pamphlet entitled, *la Mutilation des Papiers de Jouffroy par les Éclectiques*. Just to avoid the scratch of a pin, Cousin had rushed of

his own accord to meet a big scandal. The one who suffered most from all this, and who suffered cruelly, was Damiron, completely innocent of the whole matter.

It has been said—and truly, as I think—that, in order to throw the public off the scent, Cousin started on a warlike expedition against Pascal's friends guilty of having mutilated his MSS. after his death. He loudly maintained that not one syllable ought to be altered in a posthumous work without incurring the guilt of tampering with the rights of the deceased author, and those of human thought, which is the master and proprietor of noble works when they are produced. This fine zeal resulted in an admirable memoir. Cousin read it, first, at the French Academy, and then made of it a book which has suggested several fine editions of Pascal's "Thoughts." How could anyone, then, accuse him of having taken liberties with Jouffroy's prose?

When we read Cousin's memoir on the necessity of re-editing Pascal's "Thoughts," we are struck by three things:—1st, by the soundness and the extent of his literary knowledge; 2nd, by the evident delight he feels in discussing points of taste and criticism; 3rd, by his passion as a scholar for fine editions, and for the discovery of variants and MSS. His library, which he gave to the university, was the best kept and one of the most valuable collections in Paris. He was very rich in splendid engravings, in original editions, in classics both ancient and modern, chiefly those of the seventeenth century: he assigned to them the choicest

place, clothed them in sumptuous binding, arranged the rarest editions next to the *éditions de luxe*. I only wish that my friend Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, by way of recreation after having presented us in twenty volumes with a translation of Aristotle, would give himself the treat and to us the service of writing a *catalogue raisonné* of that library. It would form a whole chapter in Cousin's biography. There is not a single one of these volumes which he has not a hundred times touched, turned, and turned over again, displaced, consulted. Several of them have cost him long walks, long scenes in the back-shops of booksellers, wonders of diplomacy, even, in cases of need, a few fibs. As for money, of which he was not lavish, he had always plenty for his books. He was the favourite of all the second-hand booksellers. They had to fight many battles before they got at his last word and at his money; but many of them are either scholars or artists, and they preferred disputing with a scholar and an artist like Cousin, than pocketing the cash of an ignoramus who purchased a wonder out of vanity, and not out of love for it.

When the Duchess d'Orléans came to France, Cousin heard that she had assigned him a place in the front rank of men. You may imagine how proud he was. "I shall offer her one of my works." He might have presented the Princess Helen with his "Lectures on Kant," or his *Fragments Philosophiques*; she was quite capable of reading them. He thought it more gallant to give her his "Report on Public Teaching in Prussia"; and, luckily,

as he had inscribed it to the king, he had a copy left on Dutch paper. For the first time he told Beauzonnet to spare no expense. They drew up together the plan of an unequalled binding. The finest skins were examined; they made sure of the quality of the gilding; ornaments were made expressly for the occasion. The very case was to be a masterpiece. On one side were the arms of France, on the other those of Mecklemburg-Schwerin. Inside, the two escutcheons were placed together. Nothing equalled the delicacy of the drawing, the elegance and exact proportion of the embellishments. It required time; the Duchess had arrived, she had received Cousin in the most flattering manner, and the volume was still at the binder's. At last the day came when all was completed. The book was transferred from Beauzonnet's shop to the Sorbonne with all the necessary precautions, and deposited by itself on a table in the middle of the principal library-room. There all the leading *connaisseurs* were invited to come and inspect it. Techener was summoned; so were de Sacy, Charles Nodier, Libri, who lived opposite, the fellow-members of the *Académie Française*,—not all, those only who had the right of being present. Then came the turn of friends of consequence, and then we ourselves; we arrived after everyone else, pretending to know all about binding, and to faint with admiration. This procession lasted so long, that one day we asked one another, and we asked Cousin, when it would end. On my word, he sought no pretext; he burst out laughing, and acknowledged that he had

not the heart to separate himself from so rare a masterpiece. And yet it is no longer there, and the poor princess never took it away !

I understood better Cousin's enthusiasm for publishing beautiful *inédits* works. M. Taine, who praises him much for having had this passion, and having more than once inspired others with it, quotes a page where he entreats those who possess letters of Malebranche to publish them. "They commit a theft," says he, "by condemning them to oblivion. They owe them to us ; such documents are the heirloom of all literary men. If the owner of these MSS. dreads expense, I shall be responsible for it. If he wants a preface, or notes, here I am." This passage reminds me of an anecdote which deserves to be known by all bibliophiles.

A sale of autographs in the handwriting of Malebranche is advertised. Cousin runs there. The MS. is authentic ; he must have it. First bid. The bookseller negligently outbids. Cousin would go quickly to work, if he listened to his own feelings ; but he restrains himself, and walks slowly, so as not to disclose the immensity of his desire. The competitor, still as reserved and as quiet as before, nevertheless treads upon his heels. From one small sum to another, they reach at last a large one. Cousin begins to tremble. He questions the bookseller, and looks at the assembly. The *bonâ-fidè* purchaser now enters the room, and Cousin immediately guesses who he is. "What use would that be to you ?" He lectures him on the necessity of placing such a treasure

in good hands. A fine piece of forgetfulness on the part of a great politician ! The more he insists, the firmer is his adversary. It is in vain to struggle with so heavy a purse. To yield is a matter of necessity. The bookseller receives the precious leaves, and hands them over to his fortunate client. Cousin immediately changes his tactics. "You are going to publish that?" "Not at all." And here comes in the passage quoted by M. Taine, with plenty of addition:—"Allow me to step into your carriage." "You do me great honour." He follows him into his study, and begins, in a complimentary tone: "That is your last conquest but one." "I have something better than that." "Where?" "Here! admire!" "This does not come from the auction-room. How have you managed?" "That's my secret." "But what about the Malebranche?" Returning to his subject, where the other one awaited him firmly: "These letters are anterior to the *Recherche de la Vérité*. Here is a sentence which can be considered as the first glimmer of an opinion. . . ." "What opinion?" "That's my secret. Will you publish? I shall write a preface." "And so I shall have toiled to-day for you?" "By no means; I make you a present of my prose. You will publish it under your name." "In order that everyone may recognise you." Cousin had given up all hope. He knew his man too well. He was aware that he could never hope to conquer his obstinacy. He was struggling for honour's sake, in order that no one might accuse him of not having held every inch

of ground before the enemy. "Lend it me," he said, heaving a deep sigh. "Give me the pleasure of consulting it here. My study shall be yours." Fresh negotiations, in which, however, Cousin was half victorious. The MS., a voluminous one, was lent to him, with the solemn promise that it would be returned the next morning before ten o'clock. Night had come; Cousin could read it only by lamp-light. Off he goes with the precious treasure. Four pupils of the *École Normale*, immediately summoned for the purpose, spent the night in copying it. Madame Blanchard got ready for them some of her famous cabbage-soup, in order to strengthen them for their task. On the stroke of ten, Cousin was at the house of his adversary, who felt quite relieved on seeing him, and congratulated him on his punctuality. Cousin shams indifference, speaks of other subjects, and, opening the door to go out, says: "When do you mean to publish?" "But," answers the other, "I have already told you. My resolution is immutable." "If that is the case," says Cousin, "I shall offer you a large-paper copy this day month." It was the interlocutor's turn to bite his fingers, and to understand that he had been taken in. It now remained for him to show himself a generous friend of literature; he did so, and was right.

Cousin had entered through Pascal into the study of French seventeenth-century society. All the relations of Descartes were out of France. With Pascal the case was different. That pietist, that fanatic, belonged to the world. Through him Cousin became acquainted with

Mademoiselle de Roannez, and especially with Jacqueline. We may say that, thanks to the mania he had of carrying far his investigations, he studied Pascal in Jacqueline. His first book on the ladies of the seventeenth century may be considered, strictly speaking, as a philosophical work, on account of the heroine's name and social position. But it was already evident that Cousin was caught; he did not mean to remain confined in cloisters; philosopher though he was, or thought he had been, he would frequent the *ruelles*. You know that, besides noblemen of high rank, college pedants were received there for the sake of Greek. But *our* pedant spoke neither after the fashion of Ménage, nor after that of Vadius. He belonged to the family of the most accomplished *beaux-esprits*.

He brought to life again, in succession, Madame de Longueville, Madame de Sablé, Madame de Chevreuse, Madame de Hautefort,—yes, I repeat it, brought them to life again, whatever people may say, and despite his display of erudition. If he forsakes the ground of biography to draw a picture of French society during the seventeenth century, he takes care to warn you that the society he means to describe is that of the *précieuses*, that he takes as his resting-ground the *Grand Cyrus*. The nine volumes he thus publishes form an agreeable but odd appendix to the eight volumes of the *Histoire de la Philosophie*, the five volumes of the *Fragments Philosophiques*, the MSS. of Proclus, and Abélard's *Sic et Non*.

The case is settled. Cousin takes up his abode in the seventeenth century, for which he entertained a passionate love, and in the former half of that century, the heroic and agitated one. He evidently prefers it to the more accomplished and orderly society which reigns over Europe with Louis XIV. He might have attached himself to the heroes, the preachers—since he belongs to the trade—the great writers ;—no ; it is the ladies who attract him ; and not the pious and austere ones, such as Jacqueline, but the frail ones, and the “Fair Penitents.” He frequents *salons* and *ruelles*, rather than cloisters. If he writes a book on Mazarin, he studies him in his youth, that is to say, at the moment when he makes on the ladies of the court a trial of that political genius which will allow him to succeed as well as Richelieu did, without having to deal such heavy blows. A few years before, when Cousin translated Plato, wrote a commentary on Xenophanes, edited Proclus, who would have said that, on the approach of old age, he would plunge into the perusal of the *Grand Cyrus*, never to leave it again ; that he would be *au courant* of the observations and opinions of Mademoiselle de Scudéry ; that he would become interested, not only in the great passions and the great adventures, but also in the tastes and fancies of frail ladies ; that his curiosity would search into the folds of their heart ; and that it would become a commonplace remark, in letters, to describe him as Madame de Longueville’s posthumous lover ? He is the only man, apparently, of whom it may have been said

that he loved a mistress who had been dead for two centuries. He simply courted a delightful lady who was the sister of the "Grand Condé," and shared her brother's undisciplined temper. M. Taine has written on M. Cousin the most brilliant, the wittiest, the deepest, and most spiteful of books; he is very funny when he says that Cousin believed himself to be Condé's brother-in-law, and La Rochefoucauld's rival. The fact is, that this history of Madame de Longueville, notwithstanding a bibliographical apparatus—a little out of place, perhaps, but certainly very amusing for those who have known Cousin,—is an impassioned and living history. Those jokes on Cousin's retrospective love, which entertained, forty years ago, all the Paris *salons*, and which we repeat, M. Taine and I—he, almost as a piece of criticism, I, almost as praise,—would be really frivolous, if in the portraits painted by M. Cousin there was as little reality and life as M. Taine pretends. He compares this gallery with those of Michelet and Sainte-Beuve, and he declares, in these very words, that Cousin possesses nothing but erudition and declamation, whereas the other two possess the creative power which is the peculiar genius of the historian.

That is, in my opinion, an over-severe judgment. Writing just as a man of much wit and of very cultivated wit speaks in a *salon*, Sainte-Beuve analyses and describes his subject with precision and *finesse*; he is anxious, above all, to be true and complete, and he touches a detail over again, so that the likeness may be perfect. It

is a delicate and charming art, which, without affectation or artifice, places you on terms of intimacy with the characters, reveals to you their secrets, and makes you touch, so to say, their qualities and their defects. Michelet is more noisy : his sentences are always unexpected ; we do not perceive those of Sainte-Beuve, we do not think of them ; we must think of those of Michelet : they are totally different from everyone else's. You feel that they care little for correction, and yet they are never incorrect. They are often unfinished, because Michelet feels that his thought will be understood, and he is in a hurry to go on. He has the secret of those big words which light up a character or a scene ; he scatters them about in profusion, because they come to him unsought. No one passes so easily as he does from the grand style to the familiar one. It is not designedly produced, it is not obtained on purpose ; no affectation, no system. He allows himself to be carried away, and the reader allows himself to be led on. It is his mind which is thus made, following its current, in which he drags you along. He may be a great painter, but he is fanciful and humouristic ; he always places Michelet in the picture. If, by chance, he does not speak of himself, look closely : one of the characters occupies his place. The *ensemble* is delightful, attractive, and unsettling ; everything there is exaggerated, especially movement. Michelet has never known calm. He disdains repose. He draws you after him in a wanton race through a thousand weird scenes. When once you have caught hold of the

hand he stretches out to you, you neither can nor will stop. It is a fascination, a kind of magic. If we believe M. Taine, Cousin substitutes instead of this phantasmagoria a prosy inventory. He draws near with slow steps, puts on his spectacles, and grasps his yard-measure. If the lady has a beauty-spot, he enumerates the portraits which have reproduced it, and those which have left it out. When he describes her room, he would give you the name of the upholsterer, if he had it. He can quote texts in support of the smallest details; he quotes them from the best editions, taking care to mention the date, together with the names of the editor and the book-seller. "At every moment you see him walking into the narrative with a parcel of books under his arm." He drags through his episodes "a cart-load of documents." Even in the history of Madame de Longueville, where his heart is interested, he cannot help showing the pedant. "At the moment when the sweet features of the heroine begin to assume a shape under the reader's eyes, he hears a crash of folios tumbling down from the shelves."

Well, I grant the pedant, the quotations, and the folios. I can quite understand readers complaining of them. I have perhaps reasons of my own, which M. Taine has not, for liking pedants. Quotations, references to texts, especially when too frequent, are tedious, I own. They suggest, however, safety, and safety is a valuable means of bringing historical characters to life again. Michelet never quotes. There is not a single note in his histories.

When, by the merest chance, he gives at the bottom of a page the name of an author, do not think that he will add the chapter and the title of the book. You must absolutely take him at his word; and as he is always in a paroxysm of admiration or of anger, his word is a dangerous one. The folios, in M. Taine's sentence, are a mere joke. And yet Cousin was—yes, he was—one of the last friends of folios. There are no folios made nowadays except at the *Académie des Inscriptions*; there were many, two or three centuries ago. I have handled some in his company at Méguignon's and at Madame Porquet's. It was not very convenient, but you own yourself, in the depths of your heart, that it was splendid. I do believe that he preferred reading the *Grand Cyrus* in a folio edition. He does not make undue use of books as much as M. Taine would have us believe. He has a right to speak of them and to quote them, for he knows them, and he is a *connaisseur*. For my part, I rather like to see people clinging to the exterior and to the habits—I had almost said the costume—of their profession, especially if that profession is an amiable and honorable one. I shall always recollect a *mot* of M. Saint-Marc Girardin, who had just spent an hour with M. Nisard, M. Patin, M. Cuvillier Fleury, and other persons whom it is useless to name. "We were there, three or four pedants who had great fun." Pedant or not, we must believe that M. Cousin's literary works are attractive, since they have charmed all those persons who in Paris and in the whole of Europe take an interest in the

history of literature, and in that of ennobling sentiments. I do not think that the possession of success is always a proof that you deserve it ; I know that there are successes of a wrong kind ; but I take into account the style of the books, the author, the public to whom he addresses himself, and I maintain that in Cousin's case there are nothing but accurate ideas, noble sentiments, correct facts, and a style which would have been appreciated at Mademoiselle de Scudéry's. After all, M. Taine finds fault with M. Cousin only because he was a nineteenth century writer. He is very incomplete, and very open to criticism as such ; had he enjoyed the luck of being born during Mazarin's youth, he would be reckoned with justice amongst the choicest minds.

This conclusion quiets me a little with reference to the somewhat bitter criticisms at the beginning. On many points we are better than our ancestors, but not on literature. Instead of finding fault with M. Cousin for a few declamatory passages which have slipped here and there into his books—for I own that he was of an oratorical temperament—I prefer repeating, with Sainte-Beuve : “The *verve* of the wonderful writer, whithersoever it is directed, is thoroughly rapid and eloquent.”

I accordingly retain all my admiration of “auld lang syne” for those volumes, prepared with much learning, composed with art, which give us lists and catalogues, but invest these dry subjects with a certain charm ; they relate facts, probe the intentions and sentiments, and speak the same idiom as the heroines of whom they give

us the likeness ; if they sometimes are rather solemn and conventional, they bear, after all, for that very reason, a greater resemblance to the originals. They leave me perhaps under the impression that a man such as M. Cousin might have turned to better use his knowledge, his sagacity, and his eloquence. But, judged in themselves, these works reflect much honour on their author and on contemporary literature.

Almost all appeared, first, in the *Journal des Savants*, which accounts for their erudite style, or in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—for Cousin was fond of recasting and completing. They were, in the first instance, essays ; then review or newspaper articles ; finally, a volume, which was the definitive and complete form. Next, as he had finished his discovery and allowed his thought all its developments, he added quotations, appendices, methodical tables, somewhat after the fashion of his ancestors, the scholars and *beaux-esprits* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even during the first period of his life—I mean the stage of his metaphysical fever—he would run off to researches of an erudite nature, and to literary pursuits. I have already noticed that in 1820, and during the next few years, instead of writing a body of doctrine which he might call his own, he busied himself with publishing documents and commentaries, — Proclus, Descartes ; translations, such as Plato ; Books I and XII of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* ; travels, pedagogy ; reports on the Dutch and German schools. In like manner, after 1830, his books on the ladies of the seventeenth

century did not engross him to the point of making him forsake philosophy. He made a general revision of his lectures, and published several fresh volumes of philosophy, tuned to his official strain. His life is not so completely divided in two distinct parts as it would seem. You can guess that the translator of Plato will read the *Grand Cyrus*; you perceive that the commentator of the *Grand Cyrus* has translated Plato. The whole secret of this life is, that Cousin has loved and cultivated philosophy, especially from the political point of view. He took from the beginning philosophy as a theme for preaching. He quickly caught there the metaphysical fever, which carried him for the space of fifteen years through all the schools, and left him suddenly when the whole of philosophy abdicated in his favour and acknowledged his supremacy. His chief claims are of a political nature. M. Janet spends his great talent in establishing him as a philosopher and the leader of a school. Such a task it would never be necessary to accomplish for Kant, Schelling, or Hegel. But no efforts are needed to prove that Cousin has exercised over philosophy, teaching, and literature, in France, the greatest and the most beneficial influence.

M. Taine, in the conclusion of his brilliant and memorable sketch of Cousin, assures us that the great misfortune in his case consists in the fact of his not having been born in the seventeenth century. He would have entered the Church, and would have become the favourite preacher of those noble ladies whom we know so well,

thanks to him. He goes so far as to make us listen to one of his sermons, and to describe his emotions in the presence of Madame de Longueville.

To this picture I modestly oppose another one.

The Parisians have had the idea of founding a great school for higher studies, or some other fine establishment in which a great and noble mind can feel interested. Cousin has been requested to reoccupy his chair for the space of an hour, with the view of explaining the aim and the scheme of that establishment. He has immediately left Cannes, where his physician had exiled him, and braving fatigue for the sake of associating himself with a grand work, he has come. There he is. The chair is the same, so is the hall, so is the Sorbonne, so also is the man. He has the same voice, the same gesture, the same imagination, the same energy, which he possessed fifty years ago. As he walks in, he looks round on the crowd. Young men are there still. Another generation, but as eager for emotion and science as those he knew. They have taken their seats on the highest benches, because all the old men have rushed to hear once more him whom they call their master. The whole Institute is there; by his side you discover every scholar who holds a lectureship, every scientist who works in a laboratory. As we see him, we remember his life, his wretched childhood, his severe and brilliant studies. We follow him to the *École Normale*, where he enters first of all, and which he powerfully impresses with his influence, as a pupil to begin with, and immediately

after as a teacher :—of Greek literature, first, at the age of twenty ; then of philosophy at twenty-one. When twenty-three, he is assistant-lecturer to Royer-Collard at the *Faculté des Lettres*. Where?—hard by ; in the room of the Collège du Plessis, annexed to Louis le Grand. But he does not remain long there. The novelty and the brilliancy of his teaching draw together such a crowd, that it becomes necessary to open for him that very hall of the Sorbonne where he is to-day re-entering after an interval of half a century. It is here that he comes, between 1815 and 1820, to initiate youth in all the great problems of philosophy.

La Romiguière had charmed young men by his wit and the graces of his style : Royer-Collard had conquered them by the authority and the vigour of his dialectics ; but they were both absorbed in the study of the faculties of the soul, whereas the present orator discusses all the problems of Man's destiny, of the origin of the world, of the progress of history. All systems are familiar to him, all sciences pay him tribute ; he describes the succession of centuries and the evolutions of thought. He ascends so high, he descends so low, the range of his sight is so extensive, that the science he unfolds seems to be the synthesis of all sciences. He speaks slowly, because his words follow the movement of his thought, and because his thought searches for truth under the very eye of his hearers, whom he associates with the emotions resulting from his discoveries. What a powerful language ! coloured, varied, free, and yet chaste : clear, and yet quite

original ; adapting itself to the most arduous deductions of metaphysics, without losing aught of its limpidity ; combining in a just proportion elevation with grace ; bracing the minds and charming them alternately ; the science of a scholar, the vigour of a thinker, the eloquence of a master ! So young, and already so illustrious, he lives in the midst of his books, leading the existence of an anchorite ; the world is nothing for him : he loves, knows, and wants nothing but science. In vain he feels conscious that the government of the Restoration is there watching him. Insensible to fear as well as to ambition, he is one day seized hold of by the reaction, which has become all-powerful, and which crushes him down. Reduced to silence, he plunges into Germany, which is for us Frenchmen a mysterious and unknown country. There he is, in turns hailed by the *savants* and persecuted by the political rulers. When he reascends his professorial chair in 1828, "on the return of constitutional hopes," surrounded by the double halo of dismissal and of persecution, he brings to his hearers an entirely new system of philosophy,—not that of the seventeenth century, but the most living and powerful one : that which embraces the aspirations of the nineteenth century, and which is to stamp it for ever. 1830 entrusts to him the government of philosophy ; he devotes himself to that task with all the ardour he displayed in his teaching. He assumes the direction of the *École Normale*, presides over the jury of *agrégation*, gives to the professors their programme and their rules ; he selects them, directs them, animates them with his own zeal, nourishes them with

his doctrine, and associates them with his task ; for the space of fifteen years he teaches at the same time in all the lecture-rooms of the kingdom. The university is attacked ; he defends it ; philosophy is in danger : he saves it. If, for a moment, he turns aside from philosophy, it is for the purpose of creating, with M. Guizot, primary education. The books he has written would fill a library. That teaching, that direction, those writings—do they not represent a life fully and nobly occupied ? In the midst of all these works he found the time, besides, to hold, as a *causeur*, the first place in Parisian *salons*,—for, after the austere years of his youth, the world won him over, and he understood that style of thoroughly French literature which is called society-conversation ; there he was unrivalled, his unflagging *verve* spent itself in writings, lectures, conversations, correspondence, action. No illness, no falling off. Even when he was locked up in the Prussian dungeon, eaten up with anxiety as to the issue of his trial and the finishing of his *Plato*, he studied German, and translated some of Goethe's poems. On the advent of the Empire the direction of teaching is taken away from him. He seeks refuge in the meetings of the Academies. He enlightens them, directs them, and, to tell the whole truth, carries on intrigues in their midst. He has known all the great surviving master-minds of the last century and of the Revolution, all the great political wrestlers of the Restoration, all the statesmen of the July Monarchy, all the philosophers and great writers of France and of Europe. We find him here, at the age of seventy-

five, in his full strength, not having wasted one hour of his life. That man will work on the day of his death. He can look at all the illustrious personages who surround him,—orators, *savants*, philosophers, historians: he belongs to their world, and is on their level; and, presently, when you hear him speak, you will see that not one of them can compare with him for powers of eloquence. . . .

It is there, my dear Taine, at this place, in the midst of these hearers, that I should have liked to hear M. Cousin's last sermon, and not in the society of the fair worldly pietists of the seventeenth century. If he had addressed that crowd whilst all persons present were thus conjuring up in their memory the glorious reminiscences of his life, he would have appeared what he really was, one of the most powerful masters of this nineteenth century, to which he belongs by his qualities and his defects, and which belongs to him by so many lessons given and so many services rendered. His friends, which have never been many, his pupils, which are innumerable, all those who have known him closely, may have grievances against either his person or his doctrine. He remains, nevertheless, one of the most substantial glories of Paris, where he was born, and of the whole of France: one of the men who have exercised the greatest influence over the intellectual life of our age and of our country. The fair sex is not mixed up with his career—no living specimens, at any rate. That great blank remains in his heart and in his talent.

NOTES.

CHAPTER I.

§ 1. (1) *General Principles of the Law.* The French system of law is divided into two parts: the *droit public* and the *droit privé*. The *droit public* is the law which regulates the relations between the State and its subjects, and is divided into the *droit de l'Etat* and the *droit de l'administration*. The *droit privé* is the law which regulates the relations between individuals, and is divided into the *droit de l'homme* and the *droit de l'individu*.

§ 2. (2) *The French System of Law.* The French system of law is based on the principle of the separation of powers, which is the foundation of the modern system of government. The powers of the State are divided into three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, the executive power in the President of the Republic, and the judicial power in the Courts. The French system of law is also based on the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, which is the foundation of the modern system of justice.

§ 3. (3) *The French System of Law.* The French system of law is based on the principle of the separation of powers, which is the foundation of the modern system of government. The powers of the State are divided into three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, the executive power in the President of the Republic, and the judicial power in the Courts. The French system of law is also based on the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, which is the foundation of the modern system of justice.

§ 4. (4) *The French System of Law.* The French system of law is based on the principle of the separation of powers, which is the foundation of the modern system of government. The powers of the State are divided into three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, the executive power in the President of the Republic, and the judicial power in the Courts. The French system of law is also based on the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, which is the foundation of the modern system of justice.

§ 5. (5) *The French System of Law.* The French system of law is based on the principle of the separation of powers, which is the foundation of the modern system of government. The powers of the State are divided into three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, the executive power in the President of the Republic, and the judicial power in the Courts. The French system of law is also based on the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, which is the foundation of the modern system of justice.

§ 6. (6) *The French System of Law.* The French system of law is based on the principle of the separation of powers, which is the foundation of the modern system of government. The powers of the State are divided into three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, the executive power in the President of the Republic, and the judicial power in the Courts. The French system of law is also based on the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, which is the foundation of the modern system of justice.

(P. 16, l. 3.) . . . in every *académie*. From the educational point of view, France is divided into *académies* corresponding in number to the several Courts of Appeal.

(P. 32, l. 17.) . . . *Councillor of State* en service extraordinaire. A purely honorific title, bestowed by the government upon political men whom it wishes to reward.

(P. 69, l. 15.) *A truism* (une vérité de La Palice); allusion to the well-known piece of rhymed nonsense, of which the following is the first verse :

“ Monsieur de La Palice est mort
En perdant la vie ;
Un quart d'heure avant sa mort
Il était encore en vie.”

CHAPTER II.

(P. 76, l. 10.) . . . *for the agrégation*. No one can obtain a professorship in a *lycée* without being an *agrégé* of science or literature, as the case may be. The following are allowed to compete for the title of *agrégé* : 1st, the pupils of the *Ecole Normale* who have gone through their curriculum of studies, and have taught for three years in a *lycée* or *collège*; 2nd, the principals and professors of communal colleges, the deputy-professors and ushers after five years' duties.

CHAPTER III.

(P. 107, l. 16.) . . . *for the Rue de Grenelle*. Note, first, that the buildings of the Ministry of Public Instruction are in the Rue de Grenelle Saint-Germain ; and, second, that in Paris every minister lives at the *hôtel* where his offices are situated.

(P. 121, l. 21.) . . . *the Concours Général*. Every year the best pupils of all the Paris *lycées* compete for prizes, which are given away with great solemnity at the Sorbonne before the midsummer vacation.

CHAPTER IV.

(P. 134, l. 24.) . . . *cantonal delegation*. In every *canton* delegates are appointed by the Academic Council to see that elementary instruction is properly given to all the children.

(P. 145, l. 8.) . . . *School of Saint-Sulpice*. One of the most celebrated theological schools in France. Founded by the Abbé Ollier in 1641, the congregation of the *Sulpicians* soon became known for the soundness of its teaching ; and from it several seminaries arose, both in the mother-country and in America, the Abbé Tronson (*d.* 1700), the Abbé Emery (*d.* 1800), and many other distinguished clergymen, belonging to Saint-Sulpice.

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ERRATA.

- Page 26, lines 7, 8, for "having suffered, etc.," read "having contracted there a tendency to."
- P. 26, l. 27, for "destitution," read "dismissal."
- P. 27, l. 4, for "quickly," read "quietly."
- P. 27, l. 8, for "1815, no longer giving him," read "1828, no longer with."
- P. 27, l. 26, for "what Heaven has, etc.," read "whatever remains to me of, etc."
- P. 28, l. 4, for "destitution," read "dismissal."
- P. 29, l. 1, for "programme," read "course of lectures."
- P. 29, l. 3, for "meddling with," read "taking the lead in."
- P. 29, l. 29, for "views . . . contains," read "principles . . . embodies."
- P. 30, l. 16, for "sufficed. The Revolution," read "sufficed, and that the Revolution."
- P. 31. l. 24, for "destitution," read "dismissal."

